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The Week

THE United States Senate is threatening to investigate the loan of $12,800,000 to the Missouri Pacific Railroad by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and it certainly ought to. This is one of the most extraordinary cases of interference by President Hoover in the operations of a government agency that we can recall. Of this loan, no less than $5,850,000 is for the purpose of paying back one-half of a previous loan to the Missouri Pacific by J. P. Morgan and Company, Kuhn Loeb and Company and the Guaranty Trust Company. No wonder that the Interstate Commerce Commission gave its approval only "with some reluctance"! The three banking firms mentioned have been the official bankers for the road and, as the Interstate Commerce Commission says, "as such, they have profited largely in handling its financing in the past." But now that the road is in trouble they come hurrying, hat in hand, to the government, which gives them money out of a fund which certainly was never intended by Congress to be used for any such purpose. Commissioner Eastman adequately described this transaction in a statement made public Saturday:

> No good reason has been shown for approving a government loan to enable the applicant to make a 50-percent payment on the bank loan maturing April 1. I would have no difficulty in joining in such approval if there were any evidence that the loan were needed in the public interest. But no one has made or attempted to make such a showing. . . . Morgan and Company, Kuhn Loeb and Company and the Guaranty Trust Company would not, so long as the interest on the bank loan is paid, force a receivership by refusing an extension. . . . I realize that the majority [of the Commission] are no more persuaded than I am that there is any need for using government funds to "bail out" these banks.

It is rather ominous to remember that the last time President Hoover interfered in the work of the Interstate Commerce Commission was when he initiated his measures for consolidating the Eastern roads. His public statement issued at that time was bitterly criticized for false information and bad logic. Now he intervenes again in a railroad matter, going over the heads of both the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, in order to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for a group of Wall Street banks.

IT WOULD be difficult to overestimate the importance of intelligent direction of the banking system in any endeavor to approach a planned economy. Use and misuse of credit and investment are central in our economic confusion. On this account the most careful possible consideration should be given to the Glass bill amending the Federal Reserve Act. We are entirely in sympathy with those who argue that this is a measure which should not be hurried through Congress without extensive committee hearings and without searching examination by all those who are expert on the subject. This does not mean that at present we have objections to any specific clause of the bill, or are prepared to say that it should not eventually pass substantially in its present form. And we totally lack sympathy with much of the testimony against it uttered by bankers, who are protesting that it would interfere with the freedom of privately owned institutions to act as they please, that it involves too much in the way of

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the country has less reason to be proud of its record in both prosperity and depression than the commercial and investment bankers, we should like to know what that group is.

NOW that the federal anti-injunction bill, after grudging approval by the Attorney General and the President, has finally become law, the next step is to obtain the passage of similar measures by the state legislatures. Unjust injunctions against labor should not be issued by state judges any more than by federal. Wisconsin already has admirable legislation on this problem, and the judiciaries of certain other states such as New York have, on the whole, built up an enlightened practice in this field. But the victory needs to be consolidated everywhere. Scarcely secondary in importance is a continual vigilance to see that judges are not appointed who will nullify the act by anti-labor interpretation. Congress could probably pass no bill which would leave no loophole for a sufficiently small judge to crawl through. The fact that the President, on the advice of the Department of Justice, has already shown favor to notorious injunction judges such as Wilkerson and Mackintosh, throws suspicion on the back-handed support of the bill's constitutionality contained in Attorney General Mitchell's opinion of it rendered to President Hoover. Let us hope that this will not be the starting point of a judicial attempt to nullify its intent.

AMERICAN veterans of the Great War—or at least individuals who claim to speak for them—are engaged in a determined effort to make another raid on the United States Treasury. This time, they are trying to have all the remaining obligations under the Soldiers' Bonus become immediately due and payable, at a cost of about $2,500,000,000. All the arguments which were advanced to oppose the original Soldiers' Bonus Bill are still true, and in our present financial situation, more applicable than ever. While it is probably a fact that there are many thousands of ex-service men who are in dire need, there are at least nine times as many persons who are in equal destitution, who for various reasons were not called upon to wear a uniform; and many of the soldiers who would get—and keep—the bonus money are not in need. It is true that the distribution of this sum would stimulate consumer purchasing; it is also true that the issuance of new bonds would constitute a form of inflation and might prove an excellent temporary device in the present emergency. But if we are to do these things, we should do them for the country as a whole and not for one special group; we should do them as a result of a deliberate national policy, and in a manner to produce maximum effectiveness.

NEITHER the Governor of Kentucky nor the

from the interviews with the college students who tried unsuccessfully last week to enter the area of the coal strike in Kentucky. Governor Ruby Laffoon of Kentucky, who has sat by and seen the coal miners and their sympathizers subjected to the grossest terrorism, suggested that the students "have somebody arrested," though he knows as well as anyone that there is only mine owners' law and order in Bell and Harlan Counties. When the students protested to Governor Henry H. Horton of Tennessee regarding the brutal treatment directed against some of their number by Tennessee police, he replied with an utterly irrelevant lecture against Communism. These students say they were going to Kentucky to make sociological investigation, and there is no reason to go behind that statement. If it is true, they may console themselves with the fact that they have probably learned far more than they could have done if they had been permitted to visit the mines and talk with the miners. They have learned that the mine owners and the officials whom these mine owners control don't dare to let outsiders see the conditions in the fields. They have learned that constitutional rights of individuals are brushed aside, and a reign of terror instituted, in order to win an economic struggle. And they will remember these things as long as they live.

HOPES are again being expressed that a truce may be possible in India between the Nationalists and the British government. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and the Reverend Charles F. Andrews have been working to this end during the past few days, and the Viceroy would, of course, be glad to find some way out of the intolerable position into which he has got himself by carrying out the wishes of a Tory government at home. It is now estimated that nearly 40,000 Indians are in prison. The censorship is as complete as it can be made, both of the mails and of newspapers—so complete, indeed, that even a report to the Labor party in Great Britain was taken out of the mail. British soldiers and Indian troops which are loyal to the government are daily practising the most horrible cruelties upon prisoners whose only crime consists in wanting their country to be free. The New Republic has seen well authenticated statements describing a number of cases of torture and humiliation of an unprintable character. It is probably true that the followers of the Indian National Congress are hard to deal with; but if they are, much of the blame must be assessed against their English rulers who descend to such tactics.

ANOTHER invention in the printing trade gives a fresh threat of technological unemployment. A machine has now been invented which, through the use of the photo-electric cell, sets type automatically from typewritten copy, without human

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describe it as being sufficiently developed for commercial use. If these reports are correct, it would seem that large numbers of operators of linotype and similar machines, used in setting books and the news and editorial columns in periodicals, may presently face unemployment. They have already been threatened by the teletypesetter, a device now in practical operation, permitting any number of linotype machines to be operated simultaneously from a master keyboard which may be located a thousand miles away. Still another recent device which may prove of importance is a "justifying typewriter" which produces lines of equal length; a page of its copy can be photographed and a printing plate prepared, so the inventor claims, at substantially less than the present cost of typesetting. Mechanical invention marches steadily forward, with small concern for the train of human suffering which, at least temporarily, it leaves behind.

Bad Boys of Congress

THE REVOLT against the sales tax in Congress, and the substitution of higher rates on incomes and estates, is significant not merely of itself, but also because it signalizes the first successful political uprising against the banking and industrial interests which control the machines of both major parties and have been directing the activity of the national government without interruption ever since the depression began. It is the first visible sign that at last their prestige is beginning to wane, that the doubt of their competence in economics and government which has been growing through the general population is being inchoately felt among the Representatives.

These financial interests, whose management of affairs—or failure to manage them—was characterized by so much dishonesty, blind self-seeking and lack of foresight during the boom, and did so much to bring on the depression itself, have continued during hard times to run things as they saw best. The same captains who led our industrial armies to disaster have been trusted to execute the strategic retreat and reform our forces for a new advance. And there is little sign that they have learned anything from their former folly, or are any better fitted for command now than before. It is easy to trace the operation of their complacency and self-service every step of the way since October, 1929.

The first delusion to which they were subject was that nothing of great importance had happened, and that consequently nothing much had to be done about it. All that was needed was to feel optimistic, if necessary by distorting or ignoring the figures concerning unemployment and production. Private enterprise, if left alone, would soon find the way out. When at last it had to be acknowledged that this line was futile, their next great concern was to prevent any remedial action by government in the matter of unemployment. Sufferers from joblessness must be fed by private charity—assessed for the most part against those of small income—or not at all. Eventually it became clear that most of the unemployment relief was coming out of the treasuries of local governments and hence out of the pockets of local taxpayers and renters, but this did not disturb the financial captains. None of the cost must be assessed against those who chiefly support the federal government, those who, in other words, are taxed somewhat in accordance with their ability to pay, through the graduated income tax. Similar considerations stopped all efforts to provide employment and turn activity upward by a sufficiently large program of public works.

No doubt this negative attitude would have persisted, no matter how long the depression had continued and no matter how large the army of the jobless had grown, if capital itself had not run into grave danger. With the ebbing of confidence, with the ascendant doctrine of every man for himself, the rich began to hoard; bank failures increased to alarming proportions. Dividends began to be cut; bond issues began to be defaulted. And so those who had refused to allow the government to aid the worst sufferers from depression suddenly ran to it for their own succor. The administration and congressional leaders were lined up for a "constructive" program to bail out distressed owners of large properties. The expressed theory was, of course, that action in behalf of capital values would save not only the big boys but the millions dependent on insurance companies, on bank solvency and the like. But the interests of the general public seem never to be considered except when its advantage demands action which will obviously benefit the rich as well. So we had the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, empowered to spend up to $2,000,000,000 in precarious loans, whereas not a cent could be spared for unemployment, and not much for needed public construction. Other measures of bank relief, which could be utilized to expand credit but as a matter of fact are not being used to do so, such as the Glass-Steagall bill, were passed. Meanwhile, government expenditures were being pruned as far as possible in all other directions, including such really useful activities as that of the Children's Bureau, which, because it demonstrates the distressing effect of poverty on the children of the nation, is especially disliked by those in power.

In spite of all, however, it finally was acknowledged that federal taxes would have to be increased. A plan was evolved by the Treasury Department calling for moderate boosts in the rates on incomes, profits and estates, plus a series of excise and special consumption taxes. The Democratic leaders, intent on outbidding the Republicans for the support of the money powers, thereupon announced that the budget must at all costs be bal[illegible]

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gram was not sufficient for this purpose. They embarked on a program of pruning expenses more drastically than the official budget had done, and of adding to the Treasury proposals the regressive general sales tax, an impost chiefly on the poor. The Treasury and the leading Republicans were of course only too glad of this support for measures which they favored at heart, but had been afraid to propose. The set-up seemed perfect for another victory for concentrated property interests. Congress and the Democrats suddenly became the pets of the great economic powers.

The bipartisan revolt against this program, led chiefly by Representative La Guardia, nominally a Republican, was both unexpected and unexpectedly strong. If it had been content with throwing out the sales tax, it might be represented merely as the result of manufacturers' lobbies who were afraid they might not be able to pass the tax on to the consumer. But this action was preceded by drastic increases in the income and estate taxes, which are anathema to property interests of all kinds. The revolting Congressmen evidently were passionately convinced that the leadership which was attempting to direct their decisions neither knew what the situation demanded nor cared much for the general welfare. This explosion expressed the pent-up resentment of months against the fatuities of the ruling groups in the country.

It is of course natural that the revolt should be represented by those in authority as an undisciplined refusal to execute a plain and unpleasant duty. There has developed a sudden passion for balancing the budget among those who in previous years were invariably for lower taxation. And it is iterated and reiterated that higher income and estate taxes will not balance the budget, although, so far as we have been able to discover, there has not been published in any journal of general circulation a shred of credible proof that this is the case. The dictum of Treasury authorities on this point is accepted blindly by the newspapers and high politicians as if it were word from Olympus. Why this should be so, in spite of the fallibility of these authorities in the past, cannot be explained on any ground except the reluctance to pay higher taxes on the part of those who accept the dictum.

It is quite possible that the revision of the tax on incomes and estates so far enacted by the House of Representatives will not balance the budget in 1933, but it is palpably absurd to suppose that we cannot balance the budget by use of the principle of a graduated tax on incomes, profits and inheritances. The sales tax is certainly not the only feasible way to raise the necessary money. If it is really essential to tax those on lower income levels, that can be done without abandoning sound taxation principles by further reduction of the exemptions to the income tax. There are a number of other possible devices, such as those suggested in the article on page 196 of this issue by an experienced taxation expert, Mr. Herbert S. Wood.

The prevailing attitude toward the insurgent congressional majority on the taxation issue is strangely similar to the attitude of the property interests of Great Britain toward the Labor party majority during the British financial crisis. The great dogma in both cases was that the budget must be balanced—but balanced only by a specially favored line of action. In both cases there was held as an article of faith the fiction that a single measure, desired by the financial interests in question, was the one thing essential to this end. In Great Britain the measure in question was reduction of the "dole"—though as a matter of cold figures this was a minor drain on the exchequer. In the United States the measure is the sales tax, though there exists no proof that this is the sole possible resort. In both cases the immediate objective is not genuinely the national interest, but an adjustment of the burdens of government so that the rich shall benefit more, relatively to the poor and destitute, than they otherwise could. And the ultimate policy is to punish and discredit those who object to this aim, by the subterfuge of branding them as improvident enemies of the nation.

In both cases, of course, the opponents of the big property interests suffer from not having a carefully enough devised and validated program of their own. In Great Britain the Labor party had at least an organization and general philosophy, but in this country the impromptu revolters are acting almost entirely on the basis of impulse and foggy distrust of the powers that be. They are nominally members of the parties whose machines they are for the moment opposing; even their program on taxes had to be improvised on the spur of the moment. They have not been in a position to discredit by careful research the assertions of their opponents even on the issue under discussion. On this account, they will probably be unable to consolidate their position; even a victory in the present controversy will have little permanent value. It is, however, a significant stirring of well grounded discontent, which we ardently hope may in the not distant future have a better prepared and more coherent expression.

Realpolitik on the Danube

AS EVERYONE knows, the situation in eastern Europe is extremely serious. Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Rumania and Jugoslavia are in varying stages of economic collapse. The position is particularly bad in Hungary, hardly any better in Austria, and grave enough in the other countries mentioned. It is partly the result of the war settlements, partly a consequence of the world-wide economic depression, and in large measure, it has been brought about by intransigent nationalism, needless tariff boundaries and restrictions on the export of capital. For more than a decade, efforts

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to ameliorate these conditions have been in progress; and in general, conditions are now worse than at any previous time.

Matters have become so serious that the great European Powers are once again attempting to come to the rescue. Great Britain has invited representatives of France, Germany and Italy to a conference to be held in London early this month. The feelings of the French have been lacerated by the fact that Germany and Italy were included in the invitation; M. Tardieu had hoped to have a quiet little talk with his friend MacDonald about the plan for the Danube countries which France put forward some months ago. There seems little doubt, however, that he will swallow his pride and attend the conference.

What chance is there that out of this meeting there will grow a successful solution of the problems of eastern Europe? A realistic view of the situation forces us to the conclusion that there is almost no possibility of such a thing. The blunt truth of the matter is that these Powers do not come into the conference with clean hands. Not one of them is sincerely concerned for the improvement of conditions. Each is trying to maneuver in order to get some advantage out of the work of restoration. France, of course, is seeking to detach Austria and Hungary from their old allegiance to Germany—a task in which she has already been partly successful. Germany, on the contrary, would like to continue to dominate this part of the world as she did before the Great War. Italy wants closer relations with several of these states. England, in general, has gone back to her old policy of trying to keep the Continent in a state of equilibrium as between France and Germany and, in particular, she wants no new trade arrangements which would interfere with her own commerce, or would upset the "most favored nation" treaties which she now has with several of the Danubian powers.

Because France is today the mistress of Europe, the Tardieu plan is the one which is most important. It proposes something like the pre-war situation, with France substituted for Germany and the latter cut off as completely as possible from intercourse with the new Danubian federation. How absurd this proposal is may be seen from a glance at the present trade figures. Germany is a tremendously important factor in the foreign trade of all these countries, and France is a negligible one. Czechoslovakia, for example, sends one-fifth of her exports to Germany and receives one-fourth of her imports from that country. Her exports to and her imports from France amount to only one-fiftieth and one twenty-fifth, respectively, of her total. Germany furnishes 19.7 percent of Austria's imports and takes 17.4 percent of her exports; France furnishes 2.6 percent and receives 2.4 percent. Czechoslovakia is Jugoslavia's best customer, France doing only one percent of her foreign business. Czechoslovakia is also Hungary's best customer, and France is far down the list.

The French have for some years gone on the theory that they could offer loans as a substitute for foreign trade; but this theory is now completely discredited. Even France, with all her wealth, can offer but an insignificant portion of the money lost each year through blocking the normal channels of trade—to say nothing of the fact that her loans go to governments and, in the long run, make their financial situation worse, without helping the individuals who are suffering. To a large degree, the situation in eastern Europe must be laid directly at the door of the French who, having remade the map on a political basis, either ignoring economic principles or deliberately violating them, are now just as unwilling to see prosperity restored as they have been at any time in the past or rather, they want prosperity for everyone except Germany, and do not see that such a thing is impossible. As long as they continue in this frame of mind, there is no hope of real restoration, and such conferences as the one about to be held in London are a waste of time.

Legal Murder in Alabama

THE SUPREME COURT of the state of Alabama has confirmed the sentences of all but one of the defendants in the famous Scottsboro case. As most of our readers will remember, this is the case of eight Negro boys accused of assaulting two white girls while they were all stealing rides on a freight train in Alabama about a year ago. There is the gravest doubt as to whether the girls (who were of extremely dubious reputation) were the victims of assault at all, and even greater doubt that the eight defendants, part of a much larger number of Negro and white boys on the train, had anything to do with the incident. Their trial was conducted in an atmosphere of coercion which made it absurd to expect justice. However, unless further legal action is taken, seven of the eight will be executed in May. The eighth, and youngest, is remanded for a new trial.

A murder case cannot be appealed from the state to the federal courts unless there is reasonable evidence that in the conduct of the trial the federal Constitution was violated. It will be remembered that the United States Supreme Court refused to interfere in the Sacco-Vanzetti case, and that the Mooney case has never gone beyond the state supreme court. The attorneys for the defendants in the Scottsboro case will now attempt to bring it before the United States Supreme Court, either directly through a writ of certiorari, or by way of the federal district court on a writ of habeas corpus.

The hope that this can be done lies in the striking similarity between the affair and the famous Arkansas case which was decided by the Supreme Court in 1922. In that case, five Negroes were arrested charged with murder as a result of the death of a white man in the course of a series of

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race riots in Phillips County. A mob attempted to lynch these Negroes, and was dissuaded on the promise that they were sure to be executed after a legal trial. When this trial took place, the mob filled the courtroom and the neighborhood, and there is no doubt that an acquittal for any or all of them would have been followed by a lynching. The trial consumed only forty-five minutes; the attorney appointed by the court to represent the defendants did not even consult with them before the trial, and the jury was out only five minutes. After the men had been sentenced, the local American Legion, Rotary Club and Lions' Club all petitioned the Governor to be sure to let these Negroes be executed. Their lives were saved at the last minute by an appeal to the federal court and subsequently to the United States Supreme Court. Mr. Justice Holmes wrote the majority decision of the Court, and ruled that "a trial for murder in a state court in which the accused are hurried to conviction under mob domination without regard for their rights, is without due process of law and absolutely void." We need hardly tell our readers that this is an accurate description of the Scottsboro case as well, and under the terms of Justice Holmes' decision, it is difficult to see how the right of appeal can be refused. We are glad to learn that Mr. Walter Pollak will present the case before the Supreme Court.

The decision of the Alabama state supreme court was not unanimous. Chief Justice C. J. Anderson dissented, in a minority decision which shows clearly the travesty of justice which went on at Scottsboro. "The indictment was found," he observes, "and the trial had, within a few days after the alleged commission of the offense, and when the entire atmosphere was at fever heat." And he adds:

> Every step that was taken from the arrest and arraignment to the sentence was accompanied by the military. Soldiers removed the defendants to Gadsden for safe-keeping, soldiers escorted them back to Scottsboro for arraignment, soldiers escorted them back to Gadsden for safe-keeping while awaiting trial, soldiers returned them to Scottsboro for trial a few days thereafter, and soldiers guarded the courthouse and grounds during every step in the trial and, after trial and sentence, again removed them to Gadsden. Whether this was essential to protect the prisoners from violence, or because the officials were overapprehensive as to the condition of the public mind, matters little, as this fact alone was enough to have a coercive influence on the jury.
>
> ...These defendants were confined in jail in another county during most of the time from the arrest to the trial and local counsel had little opportunity to confer with them and prepare their defense. They were non-residents and had little time or opportunity to get in touch with their families and friends who were scattered throughout two other states, and time has demonstrated that they could or would have been represented by able counsel had a better opportunity been given by a reasonable delay in the trial of the cases, judging from the number and activity of counsel that appeared immediately or shortly after their conviction.
>
> . . . It also appears that when the jury returned the verdict in the first case tried, the courthouse was not only crowded but there was great applause and demonstration of approval and this was bound to have some influence over those to try the succeeding cases.

Justice Anderson also comments on the fact that, while the entire bar of Scottsboro was appointed by the court to aid the defendants, one of the leading firms, if not the leading one, of Scottsboro "subsequently appeared throughout for the state and actively participated in the trial of the cases." He adds that the attorney who did represent the Negroes made an appearance which was rather "*pro forma* than zealous and active," as was indicated by his declining to argue the case, though the prosecution insisted upon the right to open and close "and the state did in fact have the benefit of two arguments and the defendants none." He mentions the fact that in all eight cases the jury voted for the death penalty "notwithstanding there may have been some facts, such as difference in age, leadership, etc., that would render the conduct of some less culpable than others."

While Justice Anderson's dissent does him honor, his position can have no effect upon the attitude of the court, or Alabama in general. The state will do all that it can to prevent the appeal to the United States Supreme Court and to ensure the execution of these Negro boys. The question of justice to the defendants of course no longer enters into the matter from Alabama's point of view—if, indeed, one can speak of justice in connection with a trial of Negro defendants on a serious charge in that state. The defense has been conducted chiefly by the Communists, and the issue has become one between Communism and so-called Americanism. We have no doubt that the justices of the state supreme court who confirmed the conviction of seven of the eight Scottsboro defendants are, in their own eyes, honorable and upright Americans. We are equally sure that they are unconsciously subject to the same emotional loyalties which caused the grotesque miscarriage of justice in the original trial.

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Who Should Be Taxed, and How?

WHILE the general sales tax seems to be dead for the present session of Congress, no one can tell what will come out of the welter of conflicting interests that will largely control the drafting of a substitute measure. Special sales taxes hardly less objectionable may yet be reported by the Ways and Means Committee. It is therefore important that the public should understand fully the real nature of this whole class of levies—who would chiefly bear their burden and out of what resources, what effect they may be expected to have on personal welfare and industrial recovery, and what promise they give of yielding revenues not otherwise readily obtainable.

A sales tax is really a tax on purchases, for all agree that ordinarily it is passed on by the seller to the buyer; and since purchases are predominantly made out of income, it is predominantly a tax on income. Sales taxes differ radically, however, from the existing income tax in rates and exemptions. Instead of falling at progressively graduated rates on all income in excess of normal requirements for subsistence, they fall at flat rates on income spent for goods subject to the tax, and exempt not only income spent for goods not taxed, but also all income that is saved, reinvested, "hoarded." As only the larger incomes provide a margin for saving, and as that margin grows with the income, any sales tax tends to be graduated downward instead of upward as the taxpayer's income increases. Unless the tax is restricted to luxuries, incomes too small to pay income tax will feel its full force, and even if it is so restricted, incomes paying income tax at the highest rates will be affected negligibly.

Broadly speaking, there seem to be only two sources of tax revenue: first, current income, and second, accumulated capital that has arisen from past income. Whether calculated on purchases, on sales, on profits or otherwise, a tax is an income levy, a capital levy or a combination of the two, and the amount of revenue it can raise is determined not by the method of calculation but by the available amount of income or capital in excess of the minimum requirements of industrial and personal life; by the amount that can be spared without intolerably crippling production or intolerably lowering the standard of living.

The business man is predisposed by training and experience to favor sales taxes, and not on purely selfish grounds. The process of building up the great industrial machine on which we all depend for our livelihood has been a process of accumulating capital—of saving enough out of today's production to provide the tools for tomorrow's increased production. So, to the world of business, thrift is a cardinal virtue; the best use of money is its investment in tools of production; and the test of excellence of a tax is the extent to which it tends to promote productive investment. It is time for business men to realize, however, that we have reached a situation in which the need is not for more capital but for more consumption. We do not lack tools of production. Instead, our factories, our mines, our railroads, are largely idle, and our shelves are stacked with goods that find no buyers. What we need is markets, and nothing but markets can help us in any fundamental way. Hence the existing income tax, with its graduated rates and its exemptions for living expenses, is not only more humane in these times of distress and suffering than any consumption tax could be, but it is more salutary in its effect on our national economy, since it has less tendency to curtail the markets on which our languishing industries depend for their revival.

If, however, normal tax rates are greatly increased, it seems imperative to allow additional exemptions to taxpayers who during the present depression are supporting unemployed relatives.

Treasury officials have harped persistently on the instability of the income-tax yield. This defect may have been overstressed. It should be possible for the government, with reasonable foresight and good management, to lay up in fat years a reserve sufficient to carry it through the lean years. Nevertheless, increased stability of yield is obviously desirable. One of the most promising moves that might be made toward stability would be to levy the tax not on the income of a single year but on the average income of three to five years. Such a change has long been urged by thoughtful students of the income tax. In addition to smoothing out the yield, it would tend to correct numerous injustices arising from the fact that, under graduated tax rates, income that is received irregularly, piling up to large amounts in some years and falling away to nothing in others, pays very much larger taxes than income received in equal annual instalments. In the present crisis, moreover, the use of a five-year base would bring within the reach of increased tax rates such of the profits of the boom years 1928 and 1929 as have not been dissipated by subsequent losses. If it be true, as some of our clearest thinkers believe, that the present depression was brought on largely by the excessive amount of the profits that in those years were diverted from consumption to speculative investment, then it seems eminently just to impose additional taxes on such of those profits as are left.

The plan of averaging income over a series of years would also render unnecessary the arbitrary limitation of the tax on "capital gains" to 12½

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percent. Such gains are defined by law as gains from the sale of property held two years or more and include chiefly profits on long-term dealings in stocks, bonds and real estate. The only substantial justification for the limitation lies in the exceptional burden that the graduated tax throws on irregular income. However, under the pending bill a taxpayer whose total income does not exceed $22,000 will get no benefit from the limitation, since without its benefit no part of his tax will be paid at a higher rate than 12½ percent. On the other hand, persons who pay tax at the maximum rate even without any "capital gains" will receive a wholly unmerited reduction in their tax on such gains, amounting under the amended bill to nearly five-sixths of what they would otherwise pay.

There seems to be no good reason, except the one already mentioned, for specially lowering the tax rate on this kind of income. It is surely just as real, and will buy just as much, as other income. It produces just as great ability to pay taxes. It belongs to the class of unearned income, which most economists think should be taxed at higher rates than earned income. It includes the "unearned increment" of land values, which is specially taxed in several countries. It is, for the most part, rich men's income, and has been the foundation of some of our largest fortunes. It is income which tends to be reinvested rather than spent for consumable goods.

Advocates of low taxation of capital gains urge that the tax tends to check free dealing in property, but they do not show clearly why free dealing in property held two years or more before sale is more essential to the public welfare than free dealing in other property. They urge also that the tax is unproductive, since taxpayers commonly defer the taking of profits until their other income is slight or until tax rates have been lowered, but take losses when needed to reduce tax liability. Undoubtedly, if a taxpayer looks forward to lowered tax rates with continued high prices, he may defer taking his profits while claiming the full benefit of his losses. In the years 1917-21 many incomes were manipulated in this way, with the result that the capital losses reported in those years largely exceeded the capital gains. It must be remembered, however, that in those early years of high income-tax rates taxpayers were able, by selling depreciated securities, to realize legally losses that had actually been sustained during a number of prior years, and also that in the deflation of 1920 and 1921 losses on real estate and securities undoubtedly exceeded gains, as they have done in 1930 and 1931. Under a reasonably stabilized tax system there is no good reason to believe that deferment of profit taking would ever become a serious problem.

If the income tax were imposed on the average income of five years, the need for a special limitation on the rate would practically disappear. Failing such a sweeping change, the best way to deal with "capital gains" might be to grant a special assessment on the basis of a five-year average to the taxpayer who could show that he had suffered inequitably high taxation because of the irregular realization of his income.

The greatly increased income-tax rates written into the pending bill by the committee of the whole do not exhaust the possibilities for getting more revenue from the income tax without intolerably burdening any taxpayer. Without raising the general level of rates, changes might be made in the incidence of the tax that would increase the yield and would at the same time carry out better the principles on which the tax is based.

The personal and family exemptions are presumably designed to relieve necessary living expenses from taxation. That purpose does not justify a greater reduction in the taxes of the well-to-do than in the taxes of poorer persons; yet the graduated normal tax in the present and proposed laws tends to produce just such unequal reductions. Under the amended House bill, the family exemption of $2,500 will save $175 to a married couple receiving $15,000 a year, but only $50 to a couple receiving $6,500. Such a result could be avoided if the exemption were stated in dollars of tax rather than dollars of income.

The exemption of dividends from normal tax also yields different savings to different taxpayers. Under the pending bill the corporate income from which the dividends are drawn will pay 13 percent flat, but the individual stockholders will receive reductions of 2 percent, 4 percent, or 7 percent of their dividend income, so that the total burden on the stockholders' equitable interests in the corporate earnings will vary from 6 to 11 percent. A better plan would be to compute the individual's reduction of tax on dividends at a flat rate, or, simpler yet, to tax dividends like other income but reduce the corporation tax to offset the additional amount collected from individuals.

The changes just suggested, together with the conversion of the federal bond-interest exemption into a direct reduction of tax, would enable us to straighten out the tangled maze through which the taxpayer must now wander to compute his liability, by adopting, in place of the present normal tax and surtax, a single table of graduated rates ranging, say, from one percent on the first $2,000 to 8 or 10 percent on income between $10,000 and $12,000, and going up from that point with the rates of the pending bill.

The exemption of $2,500 for married couples is presumably designed to put them in at least as good a position as two single persons with the same aggregate income. It does so if their income does not exceed $6,500, but it leaves married couples with larger incomes at a great disadvantage. Under the House bill a married couple receiving $15,000 a year, all earned by the husband, would pay $645, while two single persons receiving $7,500 each would pay $180 each, or $360 in all. For most larger incomes the difference is roughly in the

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same proportion. This difference permits much avoidance of tax. Married couples deriving their income from property can divide their property between them and thus reduce their taxes greatly by a device that is not applicable to salary income. Residents of states where half of the husband's income belongs legally to his wife (although he retains its management) also benefit greatly. These evils might be avoided by subjecting single persons, and married persons making separate returns, to tax rates twice as high as those applied to married couples making joint returns. Such a plan could not be carried out in full if the rates of the amended House bill, running up to 72 percent, should be retained for married couples, but double rates could be established for single persons until, say, 50 percent was reached.

Although predominantly a tax on income, the sales tax would also dip in some measure into the fund of accumulated capital that is reached by the estate and gift taxes. It would affect chiefly capital reinvested in plant and equipment and capital dissipated through consumption by those whose income had failed. At most the revenue so derived from capital would be slight, and it could be easily replaced by tightening up the tax on gifts.

The committee bill makes a serious attempt to impose an effective gift tax, and thereby prevent evasion of the estate tax, by providing that the tax for each year in which gifts are made shall be based on the cumulative total of all gifts by the same donor—amounting to $3,000 or more to any one person—that have been made since the enactment of the law; credit being allowed, however, for gift taxes previously paid. Yet under the committee bill an estate of $10,000,000, held until the owner's death and transferred by will, would pay in all over a million dollars more than an estate of the same size of which a little more than half was transferred by gift before the owner's death. This seems a heavy price to pay for the uncertain advantage of stimulating transfers by gift as against transfers by will. In order to yield the maximum return and to bear on all estates alike, the tax should be imposed on the cumulative total of all transfers out of one person's estate, with credit for all gift taxes previously paid. To avoid penalizing gifts, interest on gift taxes previously paid might also be allowed as a credit against gift taxes and estate taxes subsequently assessed.

In the present crisis, one remembers the graduated corporation-profits tax that proved so effective in raising a large part of the federal revenues in the war years and the years immediately following. In the eyes of the general public that tax, graduated according to the ratio of profits to investment, seemed just and wise. In fact, however, it was not only difficult to administer, but it abounded in extreme inequalities.

There is good reason to doubt the wisdom of its

a corporation with a small invested capital that, nevertheless, succeeds in doing a large amount of business (which means, broadly speaking, rendering a large amount of service). It would seem fairer to graduate the tax according to the profit taken per unit of service rendered, so as to make it bear most heavily on the corporation that gets the largest profit out of a given service. Of course, no accurate measure of service can be devised, but the corporation's net sales would be a rough-and-ready guage that would be easy to apply.

A profits tax graduated according to the ratio of profits to sales would have substantial advantages. It would be easy to administer, since net profits are already determined for computation of the income tax, and net sales are easy to determine. Like all profits taxes, it would be difficult to pass on to the consumer, for the competition of the slightly taxed producer selling on a small margin of profit would tend to hold down prices and leave no opportunity to offset the tax with higher profits except through economies in operation.

Within any industry the tax would fall most heavily on the corporation that took the largest bite out of the sale price for its own use, and least heavily on the corporation that took the smallest bite. Among different industries it would bear most heavily on purveyors of luxuries, commonly handled in small volume at a high rate of profit.

Like all profits taxes, such a tax would tend to reduce the rewards of business efficiency; but it is doubtful whether the absolute amount of such rewards is an important factor in stimulating effort. With a general reduction in rates of profit throughout the business world, small increases would doubtless be quite as strong incentives to efficiency as larger increases would be in more prosperous times. Like the old profits tax, the tax would ignore the claims of the stockholder, who would ultimately bear the burden through reduced dividends or lowered value of his stock; but undoubtedly the recipients of dividends are, as a class, better able than the great mass of the consuming public to bear reductions of income.

A graduated profits tax of this kind would not, perhaps, be an ideal method of raising federal revenue, but if Congress is unwilling to raise the needed amount by means of the income tax, supplemented perhaps by special excise taxes on luxuries, it would be a far better alternative than a general sales tax at a flat rate. It would at least recognize the principle, so flagrantly violated by the general sales tax, that in hard times like these, when millions of consumers are on the verge of starvation and when at least a quarter of the country's plant and equipment is idle and the need for new capital is negligible, any necessary increase in federal revenues should not come out of that part of the national income that is required for subsistence, but should come out of that part which exceeds the recipients'

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Chaos or Control

V: *A Challenge to Inaction*[1]

IT WOULD be futile to lay out "a plan" for a society in the same way that an architect can make a set of drawings and specifications for a building, in which all details of measurement, of stress and strain, of material, are set down in advance and have but to be followed in detail. Social-economic planning is not a hard-and-fast, completely predetermined scheme. It is a method, a technique, a way of attacking problems. It develops in practice. It must be learned, and like other disciplines of education, it can be learned only by doing.

Least of all could any individual write a valid national plan. Successful planning is not only a method, it is a social process, in which whole communities must participate. They must have the will to coöperate for common ends. Large objectives of planning must be defined and generally accepted. These must be translated into more detailed goals and standards for action day by day, not by one man, or even by a central board only, but with the aid of agencies which ramify throughout society, from the largest unit to the smallest. Only when we have the will to plan, can the necessary goals be chosen and the necessary machinery be set up. And only when we have done that, can we proceed to learn national planning in the way in which it must be learned—by experiment, by successes and failures, by continual modification and development. Even our objectives are likely to be changed in this process. The final result cannot be foreseen clearly from the beginning. All we can do is to recognize the need for a beginning, and to outline in a large way how that beginning may be made.

The fundamental observation which points to most of the faults and disparities of our economy is that it might produce many more goods, and much more human welfare, than it does. We have the natural resources, the engineering skill, the plants and machinery, the labor supply, to increase the average standard of living steadily and fairly rapidly. It is now commonplace to speak of the absurd contrast between "overproduction" of, or over-equipment to produce, almost every necessity and luxury of life, and the fact that many persons are in want. This fact sets the stage for our effort.

During the last period of prosperity (1923-1928) we developed what looks like a fatal lack of balance between industrial production and popular purchasing power. If we had official bodies paying attention to this problem, and gathering good statistics on it, we should know more certainly what the facts were. But the best estimates we do have work out about as follows:

> *Purchasing power.* Half the farm incomes (in terms of purchasing power) did not increase, being as low as before the War. The other half increased only slightly.
>
> Manufacturing wages were lower in 1928 than in 1923. Mining wages were lower. Transportation wages were slightly higher. Building wages were higher. Altogether the average annual real earnings of wage workers probably increased no more than 5 percent from 1923 to 1928; they increased, that is, at the rate of not more than one percent a year.
>
> At the same time, there was a volume of unemployment throughout these years which seemed unduly large for a prosperous period. Manufacturing, transportation, mining and agriculture all had far fewer people at work in 1928 than in 1923. This further limited purchasing power.
>
> *Production.* Industrial production increased at the rate of about 4 percent a year, or four times as fast as wages.
>
> Railway ton-miles (tons carried one mile) increased at the rate of about 4 percent a year. This indicates a growth of distribution parallel to the growth of production.

Here is a puzzle. How could we keep on increasing our production and distribution of goods four times as rapidly as the increase of real incomes with which to buy them, in the hands of farmers and wage earners? Someone will answer, "We couldn't. That was proved in 1929." But, waiving that contention for the time being, how could we do it for five years?

Before we try to solve that puzzle, it would be well to pay some attention to another element of purchasing power—namely, profits. Industrial profits, during the period, increased at the rate of about 9 percent a year. That is, profits not only grew much faster than wages and farm incomes; they grew faster than the production and distribution of goods. This estimate fits into the whole picture very well. It took fewer men and women to manufacture and distribute an increasing amount of goods. The wages which these workers received were lowered, or raised very slightly. Therefore, the cost of the labor for each unit of goods was greatly reduced. But prices were not reduced so rapidly as were labor costs. In consequence, there was a much larger margin between cost and gross

[1] This is the last of a series of five articles, which are condensed and adapted from chapters in a forthcoming book, entitled

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Now we have part of the answer to our puzzle. The recipients of profits probably bought some of the extra goods which farmers and wage earners did not have the money to buy.

But the bulk of the dividends goes to a remarkably small part of the population. Let us examine the figures for 1930—which, though it was a depression year, showed a high total of dividends paid. According to the Statistics of Income published by the United States Treasury Department, the total of the dividends paid to those submitting income-tax returns was $4,089,612,000. Of this sum, over $3,621,000,000, or 88 percent, went to 763,357 persons, who reported net incomes of $5,000 or more a year. The other 22 percent went to the 2,613,195 persons reporting net incomes of under $5,000: more than three and one-half times as many persons, receiving only one-quarter as much in dividends. Only 3,376,552 persons had incomes large enough to be reported at all—as opposed to over 48,000,000 gainfully occupied in the country. Probably only a small proportion of the total dividends paid in the nation went to those whose incomes were too low to be reported. A similar story, though in less marked proportions, is told by the figures of income from partnerships.

It is absurd to suppose that 763,357 persons—or even 3,376,552 persons—receiving the bulk of the increase in distributed profits, could have purchased enough extra goods for their personal use or that of their families to absorb that great gain in the aggregate production and distribution of the nation.

So our puzzle is not yet solved. We shall have to call in another factor. The small minority who received the additional profits of course did not spend all their extra income for consumable goods. They invested a lot of it in securities—stocks, bonds, real-estate mortgages and the like. The demand for these securities was so great that they were issued in enormous quantities. The money so spent financed the erection of large numbers of industrial plants, apartment houses and business buildings. It bought a vast amount of new machinery. That part of it which was loaned abroad stimulated the production of goods for export. The powerful magnet of large profits attracted an immense new capital investment. This investment itself came to a large extent out of the profits made. The flow of investment helped to keep up the volume of production—not in goods to be consumed, but in more permanent goods, many of which were designed to be used in still more production.

To the amount expended for durable goods through individual investment must be added an almost equally large amount so spent by business concerns themselves, out of their undistributed profits. Great companies accumulated large surpluses and reserves, which they either invested directly in new productive facilities or used to buy the securities of other companies, which thus had larger funds to invest.

Still the picture is not complete. The farmers and wage earners and small salary earners probably increased their purchases somewhat more rapidly than their cash incomes grew. They were enabled to do this by a liberal extension of instalment and other consumers' credit.

Finally, we have the expansion of speculative credit. Thousands of persons found it easy to buy stocks and bonds by borrowing the money wherewith to do so. The credit which played so large a part in this speculative boom came, in the first instance, from the banks, whose large gold reserves permitted great expansion of loans. Then it came from the surplus profits of great corporations. These companies could make more profit by lending money to persons who wanted to speculate in their stock than they could by using the money in producing and selling more goods at a profit. Money to be loaned to speculators was also attracted from Europe and all over the world. This expansion of credit further increased our production of buildings, factories and machinery, in spite of the fact that much of it resulted merely in rolling up figures on the brokers' blackboards.

All the while, the basis of our economic pyramid—the cash purchasing power in the hands of the great bulk of the population, the farmers and wage earners—was scarcely increasing at all. Is it any wonder that the whole structure became top-heavy? Is it any wonder that we found ourselves, at the end of the period, with goods which could not be sold, and with farms and buildings and factories and machinery which could not be used because there was not sufficient market for their products? Is it any wonder that there became necessary a drastic reduction of profits, of values of stocks, bonds and mortgages?

The above is not submitted as a complete and authenticated explanation of the depression. There are many disturbing influences which are not included in it. We should have to know far more than we do before we could be absolutely sure that this is even a reliable outline of the course of events. But we are reasonably sure that it points to certain important areas of maladjustment. If we had the means of regulating these areas more intelligently, we should at least be in a better position to know whether such a rough picture as this was justified. Few will deny that the following goals are desirable:

1. Wages and farm incomes must be increased as ability to produce what is meant to be bought with these incomes increases.

2. The investment of new capital in productive facilities must be adjusted to the purchasing power which is going to be available to absorb the product of those facilities. It must not be, first, expanded too rapidly, and then contracted, as it now is, but must proceed regularly.

3. The extension of credit to individuals, investors or business concerns must be related to reasonable expectations regarding the use of that credit in actual

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consumption or production. Speculative expansions and contractions in credit must be avoided.

These aims are interrelated. We can scarcely achieve any one of them without at the same time achieving the other two. The first aims of a national-planning machinery in the United States might well be, therefore, to increase the lower ranges of income, to regularize new capital investment and to exercise intelligent control over credit expansion.

How may these aims be sought? What is it that keeps the low incomes down and creates the rapid growth of profit which leads to overexpansion of investment and the inflation of credit? We can, if we like, give abstract answers like "the capitalist system" or "private ownership of industry" or "the profit system." On the one side radicals may blame the greed of profiteers. Or, on the other side, conservatives may blame the incapacity of individual wage earners or farmers or small employers. But answers like these are not enlightening without further specification. What are the particular characteristics of our system which lead to these particular results? It would be one of the first tasks of planning agencies to investigate these matters and try various expedients to remedy them.

Before any experiment, however, it is possible to make some pretty good guesses, as follows:

Wages. Wages are low in some industries because, in the industries in question, there do not exist thoroughly organized and well led labor unions, independent of management, to standardize the rates paid throughout the industry and push them up to the highest point which the industry can afford.

The utmost that could be done by collective bargaining alone, however, would not remove important obstacles to the increase of wages. In almost every industry there are some establishments which could afford to pay more than other establishments. The general level of wages in the industry cannot be raised above what those establishments having the highest costs can afford to pay. An important job would, therefore, be to study the relative costs of the various establishments, see what could be done to lower the costs of the less efficient and, after the utmost possible had been done in this direction, transfer as much production as possible to the lower-cost concerns and thus eliminate the higher-cost ones. If costs in an industry could be substantially equalized on the lowest level existing, wages could be substantially increased without raising prices, and aggregate profits would be correspondingly reduced. It is the *marginal concern* which creates many of our difficulties.

We also have whole industries which are marginal in the sense that they pay low wages, create unemployment and thus lower general standards. Such industries are bituminous coal mining and cotton-textile manufacturing. Only drastic reorganization of these industries to eliminate cutthroat competition, inefficient practices, overinvestment and overproduction could solve their difficulties. Although there is no such thing as general overproduction in relation to the real needs of the population, there is little question that some industries like these are equipped to produce more than the population could conceivably use.

In any attempt to increase purchasing power we must consider prices as well as wages. Some industries undoubtedly charge more than they ought, even though the wages they pay are not high enough. They do so because for some reason they happen to be in a favorable competitive position in relation to other industries. In some cases their prices might be lowered at the expense of profit; in other cases more efficient practices would be required. Cases in point are probably the public utilities furnishing electricity and gas (too large profits and some inefficiency) and housing construction (which needs thorough reorganization, beginning with regional planning, if it is to produce good housing within the means of the majority).

Farm incomes. Raising farm income is one of the toughest problems which would face a planning organization. It could not be done by decree, or quickly. It requires organization of the various branches of commercial farming to the end that

(a) the most efficient and lowest-cost methods and producing organizations would be used and
(b) output would be adjusted to the demand for the product at a reasonable price.

A thoroughgoing and intelligent land-utilization policy would be an essential basis, to limit cultivation of land which should be in forests or otherwise used, and to devote cultivated land to the uses for which it was best adapted. Regional and national agricultural-planning organizations could work out and apply this policy, besides studying markets and demand, and could draw up production schedules. We have an excellent basis for such organizations in our wide array of expert farm services with their statistical and technical work (especially the Agricultural Outlook Report of the Department of Agriculture) in farm cooperatives, credit agencies, forestry and park services and the like.

Investment. The basis of any sound investment policy is better accounting and statistical knowledge than we have. We need to know currently the amount and sources of investment funds. They come largely from

(a) corporate and business surpluses,
(b) individual savings, as in savings banks, insurance companies, building and loan associations and individual purchases of new securities,
(c) bank credit,
(d) governmental-construction funds.

We need to know currently the uses of these funds in new productive plant and equipment in the several industries, in new building and construction, etc.

As a guide to saving and investment, we need estimates of future consumption of the several goods and services to be produced by new investment. These estimates could be built on a detailed survey of popular purchasing power and a concrete program of increasing it.

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Credit. With the above information we should be in a better position to know whether, and how much, credit was being unduly expanded or contracted, and whether it was being used for the right purposes.

There is no region of national economic policy which would be foreign to the effort to achieve these ends. Taxation and governmental expenditures would be closely related to it. The government takes income and spends it. It has a choice of taking income in such ways that popular purchasing power will be decreased (as in sales taxes and tariff duties) or in such ways that the incomes of the richer sections of the community will be decreased (as income taxes, inheritance taxes, taxes on profits). It can spend money for new permanent investment (as in public works or housing) or in performing current services. It can do all these things with much less regard for current market demand that can private business, since most of its income does not arise from sales in the market, and most of its expenditures can be made regardless of opportunities for profit. These facts give the regulation of taxation and government expenditure a large place in restoring economic balances when these are upset by the operations of industry.

Foreign trade and foreign investment are also closely related to the process. We ought to know what we need to import, and what we can best export to pay for these imports, in order to fulfill our domestic requirements for a rising standard of living. We ought to know how these requirements fit in with the other elements in the international balance of payments. We ought not to do absurd and self-contradictory things like investing capital abroad without being willing to accept in return the goods necessary to pay the interest on the investment.

It is clear that if tasks like these are to be accomplished, we need certain kinds of machinery or organization with which to accomplish them.

There must be a central administrative organ of some sort for each important industry—and by industry in this connection is meant not merely "productive" industries like steel and automobile manufacture, but transportation, retail distribution, banking. Single industries must be got under control if we are to do things like establishing rising wage standards without increasing prices, relating production and new investment to estimated demands for consumption. And each of these central administration organs must have its planning agency, its statistical staff.

Mr. Gerard Swope's plan, and that of a Committee of the United States Chamber of Commerce, contemplate revising the anti-trust laws to allow business units to combine in controlling prices and production. Agreement among business units to restrict output, now illegal in this country, but practised in Germany and France under the name of the cartel, usually follows the practice of setting a total maximum output, which is allocated among the concerns participating in the agreement by a quota system. The high-cost concern gets its quota as well as the low-cost one. This tends, not to eliminate the high-cost concern and thus reduce the spread between wages and selling prices, but to keep the high-cost concern in existence, and maintain what is likely to be an extravagant rate of profit for those having the lower costs. This is clearly undesirable—if it works. Often it does not work, because of the temptation on the part of the individual competitors to break the agreement. To do nothing except remove the restrictions of the anti-trust laws would thus be unsatisfactory. In some cases it would work—to the general disadvantage—and in other cases it would not work at all. In some cases, it is possible that a trade association or cartel under adequate public regulation would improve the situation, but this would not be universally true.

Another defect in this program of single-industry control is that it does not go far enough, because it provides no machinery to oversee the important relations among industries, between distribution and production, between these things and credit and investment.

There is needed a National Economic Board at the top, representing the whole public. This would correlate the plans and practices of the various industries with one another. It would bring together the relevant statistical material from all sources and fill in the gaps. It would work out a general plan for raising the lowest incomes and regulating the flow of investment and credit. It would turn its attention, like a searchlight, on these areas and industries which were causing trouble and obstructing the general program. It would advise government as to its responsibilities in the carrying out of the program.

This Board should be composed, not of bargaining representatives of various interests, but of qualified experts representing the nation as a whole. It should, of course, have an adequate staff of economists, statisticians, engineers and accountants. As a representative of the general interest, it ought to be established by law, with certain duties and powers. It should be supported by governmental appropriation, and appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

One of the first duties of a Board like this would be to help in working out the best form of organization for each industry, and represent the public in the drafting of that organization. It would, for instance, call together representatives of the soft-coal mine owners, the consumers of coal, the coal technicians and the organizations of labor in coal. It would say to them: "Your industry is, and has been for years, one of the chief obstacles to a genuine prosperity for the nation. It must be organized to pay higher wages without charging unduly high prices, give steady employment, and offer efficient service. What needs to be done to control your industry and make it a sound unit in a national economy? We are instructed by Congress to aid

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you and your experts in formulating a plan of organization for these purposes. We are delegating our own experts to advise you at every stage of your researches and deliberations. We will give you two years to produce a proposal, though we should like one as soon as possible. When your proposal is ready, we will either approve it or disapprove it, having in mind the objectives to be sought. If you do not produce a plan or do not produce one which we can approve, we are instructed by Congress to make one of our own. If legislation is required, we shall recommend to Congress the measures we approve. After the coal organization is set up, we shall continue to keep in close touch with it, in order to see that the objectives are approached, and in order to correlate your annual plans for wages, employment, production, prices, profits and investment with those of other industries."

In tackling an organizing job of this kind, the Board would have in mind the possibility, not merely of a trade association or cartel, but of large consolidations under some form of public regulation, and of complete public ownership by such a device as a publicly owned corporation which would buy out the existing individual owners with debentures. The Board should not be limited in its ultimate choice by any bias in favor of "private enterprise." It should choose the form which, after thorough examination, seemed best suited to the ends in view. My own opinion is that in this case, public ownership would be found most desirable, as in other basic industries.

The Board would, in the same manner, put up to the construction industry and its chief customers the task of organizing to prevent the wide swings of activity which now do much to shove us to heights of inflation and then plunge us down again. It would put experts to work in order to see what would have to be done to provide good housing, in healthful and pleasant surroundings, for the majority of the population which now cannot afford it. This is one of the greatest unused opportunities to provide a better standard of life and, at the same time, furnish a large amount of employment in the building industry and those which supply its materials. It is a magnificent way to use surplus savings, instead of pouring them into unneeded and unused equipment.

So the problems of each productive industry would be approached, industry by industry.

Control of the banking system would have to be strengthened. And we should have to plan new investment, to plan the use of credit.

Distribution would be an important field for organization. The Board would have to get the chain stores, the department stores, the mail-order houses, to combine on a plan for reducing distributive waste, for better standardization and specification of goods in the interest of their usefulness to the consumer. There would be needed, also, a means of estimating future requirements of consumption, area by area. This would be an extension and completion of market studies already in existence.

There would have to be, under the Board, a labor administration. It would oversee a nation-wide system of employment exchanges to bring workers and jobs together, and currently provide the facts concerning unemployment and labor shortages. It would have a training department to prepare for employment elsewhere any group of workers who had to be transferred from an obsolescent industry or one in which mechanization was so rapid that full employment could not be furnished by expanding demand. It would administer unemployment insurance to tide over unavoidable periods of joblessness. This would, in itself, provide a stabilizing influence by maintaining the purchasing power of the unemployed. It would keep close tab on wages and hours, so that the Board would know whether its general wage policy was being carried out. The labor administration would of course work closely with the labor organizations. The growth of these should be encouraged; legal restrictions on their expansion should be removed.

Under a well planned system, there ought to be no grave problem of "technological unemployment." Everyone can be kept busy for normal working hours providing the goods and services needed to bring the mass of the population up to a moderately enjoyable standard of living if only we can find the means of sufficiently enlarging purchasing power. If technical advances go so far that we really produce more than people want, no matter what their capacity to pay, shorter working hours can be substituted for larger production. Every time work is made easier, we can enjoy the result in more product or more leisure, as we choose.

Various regional-planning agencies are necessary, to lay out our facilities properly on their geographical base, to furnish the proper setting for, to correlating our houses, factories, roads, water supplies, forest and farm areas, recreation regions, railroads, power lines. Thus the work would be decentralized geographically as well as industrially. The beginnings of such bodies are already in existence in several states and regions.

This is an attempt to apply a scientific, experimental method to the solution of the question concerning how much compulsion it is necessary to exercise over business in effectuating national planning. It does not make the decision wholesale, and in advance of investigation and trial.

The planning activity here sketched would, if it succeeded, fulfill the requirements learned from our war experience with planning. It begins with an objective capable of arousing enthusiasm—a war against poverty, unemployment, insecurity, an expansion of the standard of living, a great national effort toward a finer civilization, a desire to do a good job and use properly the tools we have. By its devices to increase purchasing power and predict consumer demand, and its control of expenditures

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for new investment, it builds up the economic equivalent for political police power. It can decide questions as to how much we need to produce and in what order. It can point out to industry the necessities inherent in the situation—the facts which, in the end, exert authority. For the very essence of planning is not just someone's capricious desire to plan, but organized, democratic adjustment to the situation created by modern technology. The practical problem is to develop out of this situation the will to plan collectively, and to give that will a sufficiently powerful political implement so that the effort to plan may be begun, and carried through.

GEORGE SOULE.

The Lost Child

Spring under the plow,
Spring under the grass,
Let March stand still forever,
Before spring comes to pass;
The lark in the mind has flown,
And the wind says alas.

The wind says alas,
And brings the weeping rain;
My neighbor had a son,
And my neighbor's son was ta'en;
None knows whether he lives,
Or whether he was slain.

With cloaks woven of wind,
They stood where they could see;
Then one crept to the sleeping child,
As a leaf falls, silently;
None knows if they were two,
Or if they were three;
Or whether they bore him inland,
Or whether oversea.

Weep for my neighbor's son,
Little he was and dear;
His father called him by his name,
And he turned his head to hear;
And he was borne away
At the turning of the year.

Spring, hold back your buds,
And birds in the wood, be still;
The specter air may blossom,
And a green tide drown the hill;
But the winds of March have blown
Hither the seeds of ill.

The winds of March have blown
Sorrow into my heart;
Fallow the land may lie
Where the wren and plover dart;
Till my neighbor has his son again,
And the dark days depart.

CHARLES NORMAN.

Eating American

REGIONAL cooking has struck New York. And with such a bang that soon nobody will be left to say, when the subject is brought up: "You mean regional *planning?*" Not since Messrs. Babbitt and More first handed around the undiluted milk of the Word in re Humanism, have so many of us got all mixed up at the start of what shows every sign of rapidly becoming a movement.

Of course, every traveler knows those delightful little Parisian restaurants where *la cuisine régionale* can be had: *beurre blanc* from Nantes, *bouillabaisse* from Marseilles or *garbure béarnaise*. As we sat at Roziers' on the Place St. Michel, have we not often thought how nice it would be if only we got regional dishes in New York? But only a few of us ever realized that our own *plats régionaux* would turn out to be codfish balls and broiled spareribs!

It is the Waldorf-Astoria which has set its sign and seal on our local cooking. And although the result may be highly satisfactory to amateurs of traditional American food, it is doubtless bound to bewilder those of us who have not heard the news of how smart it is to be regional. Upset indeed the ladies from Urbana, Illinois or Montgomery, Alabama are likely to be, when, arriving at the Waldorf, reverently expecting lobster *Thermidor* and baked Alaska, they discover that the resident rich and great of New York are demanding, as the last word in culinary effort, a little potlikker and corn pone!

In some of the Waldorf's luxurious modernistic apartments smells are rising that haven't been smelled for thirty years! The housekeeper from Easton, Pennsylvania may well be edified to see how steamed up Park Avenue is about meat dumplings and corned beef and cabbage. A fine thing it is to know that even the biggest circles lead back home sooner or later, and that, traveling via *crêpes Suzettes* and Peach Melba, you come to rest at corned-beef hash. There is even "picked-up codfish," just as my Aunt Sally has had it every Sunday morning for the last forty years. And wouldn't it give Aunt Sally a turn to see a young man in evening clothes serving her very own codfish out of a silver dish!

Do *you* know what pan dowdy is? Maybe not if you happen to have been born in New England or Alabama, but certainly you must know if your mother was Pennsylvania Dutch. Wisconsin chicken cake is another one that I never heard of. So lost to a patriotic pride in victuals has America become, that I venture to bet the hotelkeepers of Madison never heard of it either, and when the good news reaches Wisconsin of the national importance of its chicken cake, I can see them all reaching for their hats and dashing out to get the recipe from the nearest farmer's wife. Or maybe they will just wire New York for it.

Smartness aside, this revival of native specialties is altogether good, for if anything is going to

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our old-fashioned American cooking from going on the rocks, it has got to be a movement. How people could actually get themselves all worked up about saving the grizzly bear of the Rockies, and sit calmly by while such a magnificent dish as South Carolina Hoppin' John faces extinction, was more than I could ever understand! True, New England mutton dumpling at first thought moves me to action no more than Rocky Mountain grizzlies, but to know something about making it is on a par with discovering how the Declaration of Independence starts off. For this country was largely settled on dumplings—Puritan housewives of New England bringing the dumpling tradition across the Atlantic, and nearly a century later, the pioneers taking it with them in the covered wagons. There is even a legend that once when an extra-big train of wagons was crossing the plains back in the thirties, it was found expedient to separate it into two sections, which, for lack of any better basis of division, was done by counting off those who liked boiled dumplings into one group, and those who preferred a crusty ash cake into the other. That plan not only divided the pioneers themselves satisfactorily, but took care of the equipment, too—the pot going along with the dumpling contingent and the ash-cake members getting the skillet.

It may already be too late to stem the rising tide of bunk in radio broadcasting about food these days. After listening in on one "food program" last week, I am inclined to think nothing can be done. Moreover, I resent the phrase "listening in" as applied to the entirely unavoidable accident of having a radio turned on me in the office of an advertising agency. What was going on in this particular food hour was what is technically known as a "skit," and portrayed the very voluble agonies of a young housekeeper whose husband has asked a friend in for a little home cooking. Naturally enough, the young housekeeper is telling the grocer all about it, and confiding in him that she can't make a decent pie and that her mayonnaise always curdles. The grocer is a completely broken reed in such a crisis, as all he can offer is: "Well, of course the gentleman *would* expect a nice pie."

Why he would so confidently expect a nice pie is never explained, for, just at that moment, a male customer in the grocery store, of whose presence we have been made aware by a series of radio coughs, gives one special introductory cough and urges the young housekeeper to let him help her out of her difficulties. And does he beg her to give up the pie and mayonnaise fixation and search her heart for something on God's earth that she *does* know how to make? Maybe a baked apple or a French dressing for her salad? Not he! He suggests a PIE MADE BY MAGIC! For he, too, assumes at once that the gentleman would expect a pie—only by this time there is no more talk on anybody's part of its being a *nice* pie. And then, believe it or not, that dreadful man goes on to tell the young housekeeper how to make a pie that requires no cooking—just stirring together Screech Owl Condensed Milk and lemon juice poured over a pie plate lined with graham crackers! Of course, my first instinct was, just as yours undoubtedly is, to warn the husband's friend. But that turns out all right, too, for (would you believe it?) it is the friend who has been giving all this advice in the grocery store—that's what makes it a skit—and if there ever was anybody whom I would like to see confronted with an uncooked condensed-milk graham-cracker magic pie, it is that same advice-bestower!

With such atrocities going on in the name of prosperity and salesmanship, what hope is there for posterity and food in this country unless we rush to the colors of back-to-the-country cooking? Do you remember those entrancing little maps that used to be (and probably are still) in all French geographies? The *Départements* of France with the picture of a cheese in the Seine et Marne, a neat collection of bottles in the Gironde, a jar labeled "Confiture" in the Meuse and a calculating-looking sardine taking up nearly the whole of Finisterre. A wonderfully impressive lesson they were in *gourmandise* as well as geography, but no more edifying picture than could be presented of this country, if an able cartographer and a discriminating glutton would set to work in intelligent coöperation. Our map could have stars to the North for baked beans and pie for breakfast, and double stars to the South for crab gumbo and shrimp jumbalaya. It could be captioned EAT AMERICA FIRST, and would be worth studying. SHEILA HIBBEN.

Washington Notes

Back of the Sales Tax Revolt—Roosevelt and the Progressives—Routing Garner—The Correspondents' Pet

THE SMASHING defeat of the sales tax in the House, by a vote of 223 to 153, has altered the political landscape to a tremendous extent. As the newspaper headlines tell us, it has been a terrific blow to the prestige of the so-called leaders in both parties, but particularly the Democratic. It has pretty well punctured the Garner-for-President boom so sedulously fostered by William Randolph Hearst. It has helped along the Roosevelt boom. For once, the headlines are just about correct. It is still faintly possible, of course, that the sales tax might be restored in conference committee, but in view of the decisive House vote, the chance of this seems to have shrunk to the vanishing point.

The truth is that underlying the sales-tax bolt was the resentment among the more progressive Democratic members in House and Senate against the big-business control of their party, which has smothered every really Democratic impulse since the session began and has transformed the party into a mere adjunct of the regular Republican organization. I have frequently mentioned the theory that in order to win this fall the Democrats must not only avoid any attitude in Congress which might shake the confidence

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of Big Business in party "sanity," but that they must adopt a platform and nominate a candidate in accord with with the rank and file, for they are beginning to realize where it is leading them. If Democratic solidarity in House or Senate is to be regained during this session, the official party leaders must display a more liberal and less reactionary trend.

Actually, what this progressive movement among the Democrats amounts to is an effort to shake off the Raskob-Shouse management, and it is principally promoted by friends of Governor Roosevelt. So far as progressive Democrats are concerned—and progressive Republicans, too, for that matter—Roosevelt suits them better as a presidential candidate than anyone else in the field. In spite of his weaknesses and concessions to conservatism, the fact remains that no other candidate now in the offing has even a leaning toward the progressive point of view.

The opposition to Roosevelt is perhaps the most favorable thing that can be brought forward to support the theory of his progressivism. So far as I know, there is not one reactionary Democrat who does not oppose him, and there are few of liberal tendencies who do not favor him. Certainly this is true in Congress, and it is an interesting fact that in the House practically every Democratic opponent of the sales tax is pro-Roosevelt, though so far as I know, Governor Roosevelt has not issued any statement on the tax bill.

The time has clearly gone by when the Democratic party in either House or Senate will accept the Raskob-Shouse guidance on economic issues. From the start there has been a real reluctance among a more or less numerous element to follow the National Committee machine advice. This reluctance has been vastly enhanced by the general realization that the headquarters machine, despite the surface pretense of neutrality, is intensely hostile to Roosevelt's nomination, and is doing all it can, without being caught, to prevent it.

This fight against the sales tax was not exclusively a matter of opposition to the tax. Mixed up in it are a number of other things. First, there is the distaste for the big money, pseudo-Democratic domination of the national headquarters; second, the resentment of the efforts of the Smith-Hague-Cermak-Walsh-Ely combination to ditch Roosevelt and nominate a candidate who is not only acceptable to the business interests, but is, so far as political, social and economic philosophy is concerned, in no way different from Hoover; third, the determination to force the Democratic party to accept a liberal attitude in the 1932 campaign, rather than permit it to be placed immovably in the Republican rut.

The defeat of the sales tax was a bitter blow to Garner as it was to his political sponsor, Mr. Hearst, who has once again shown the singular inability of his papers to wield political influence at all commensurate with their circulation. The revolt against the tax came to Garner, I believe, with the jolt of a complete surprise. One trouble was that Mr. Garner had taken his newspaper eulogies a little more seriously than he should. The constant repetition of the statement that he was a great leader whom Democratic members delighted to follow, a man who had a party control unparalleled in several generations, was pleasant and easy to believe.

On the moratorium, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the farm land-bank bill and other of the Hoover recommendations, Mr. Garner had no difficulty at all in lining up his party with almost complete solidarity. He anticipated none on the tax bill. The rift in the ranks was wide open before he knew it had started. His first efforts to close it up and get the boys back in line were so unavailing as to be ridiculous. To be frank about it, quite a little of the gilt with which Mr. Hearst so heavily encased his candidate has been rubbed off; some of his heroic aspects have disappeared and he appears again as an ordinary Texas Congressman, whom the turn of the political wheel and the seniority rule in the House has elevated to the speakership. Though I like Jack Garner very much and wish him well, still I think what has happened to him is more beneficial than otherwise. It will, I believe, be good for him to have had a little of that self-confidence removed.

Another reason I was glad to see his power deflated was because the newspaper fraternity in Washington had, it seemed to me, gone a bit silly about Jack. Partly this was due, I think, to the intense hostility of most of them to Mr. Hoover, but partly, too, to their hostility to Roosevelt. In the New York City manner, they refer to him as a "Boy Scout" and are generally contemptuous. This state of mind toward Hoover and Roosevelt, into which so many of our profound political observers and commentators in this section have drifted, led to something like a rush toward Garner. They got him considerably beyond where he belonged and the ruckus in the ranks has restored, I think, a sense of proportion both to his boosters and himself, which is a good thing all around.

Washington. T. R. B.

Ambassador in Art

I WAS looking one day at Tintoretto's "Crucifixion" in the Scuola San Rocco, that painting with its wild beauty checked and steadied by powerful thought, technical command and a fine abstract arrangement, composition that is completely expressive of the artist's idea. The lower two-thirds of the big space is crowded with figures, the cross on which Jesus hangs is on the vertical axis, his head touches the very top line of the picture. Below are various historical incidents, and the raising of the two thieves on their crosses, detail almost realistic, powerfully seen. A pyramidal group fills the foreground center, a triangle begins at the foot of the cross and moves outward and upward, broken at the edges with figures and trees. This picture has been compared to Greek drama, which is for once a most fruitful comparison, so uncommon in the criticism of painting. The realistic details, the figures, the actions, as in Greek drama, make up the base, and here the pity lies also. The theme is lifted high; that single figure on the cross, against the sky, turns all pain into a kind of metaphysical splendor and bare reason into the humility of prayer and understanding.

From this picture power, emotion and idea seem to bring us into a kind of eternity, which is the picture; but yet at the same moment under our eyes the whole life in

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it is reborn and awakens, and so—to use a phrase of De Sanctis'—and so in the eternal reappears time; something of the present and the future of our spirit moves in this great work of art.

At length I went out along the streets and to the piazza, where I sat down at Florian's. It was here, resting it on the little table beside the coffee cup, under the cloudless sky of a spring morning, I opened my New Republic; the page was that with Mr. Felix Frankfurter's review of Judge Cardozo's book, and after a delightful beginning, I came to the sentence quoted from Mr. Justice Holmes:

"Of course the law is not the place for the artist or the poet. The law is the calling of thinkers."

Mr. Justice Holmes, noted for his learning and almost as famous for preserving through generations his charm and liberalism as Patti was for keeping her high C! I remember how that sentence came upon me, but almost any sort of taste would tell us that such reflections if set down now would be too personal both as to me and as to Mr. Justice Holmes. Suffice it to say I arose presently and followed the arcade down toward the Doge's Palace and into the *piazzetta* there. I stood propped against a column looking across at the Library of St. Mark's. I looked at that façade of Sansovino's, which I had looked at so often before; those pilasters and columns, the panels above and that sculptured frieze; the elegance, the invention, the superb learning and sophistication. How much of a spiritual indifference, an inexhaustible mentality, out of the Renaissance was there! In the morning light the endlessly varied figures took on a fresh life. I saw the intellectual rhythm of the design, quietly ornate, broadly sure of itself; sure too of those forms in it that arrested and held the fleeting glory of thought. All actuality had first been broken up, and in the artist's mind the visible and intellectual elements had been drawn again to each other, as if by a kind of love, and had moved toward the birth of a new life.

It is obvious that great artists gather up, cleanse with their creative joy, and create a body for, whole epochs and cycles of the human race; and that by these works of art men have lived, found themselves, and from them gone on toward a new art that will express what has arrived to seek its own expression. Within this society of men diverse great figures from time to time have, of course, appeared; but it could hardly be said that law-thinkers had thought it all out before there was anything to think about or society to think for. In this respect their lot was at least the same as the artists', those unthinkers, all emotion, who needs must find, I should think, their favorite law-god in Justinian, who, with a weakness such as might have been expected from a poet perhaps, allowed his laws to be suggested now and then by his beloved wife, a sometime dancing girl, shall we say, or if we shall not say, a former courtesan—the legal distinction between the two was not then so clear as it now is.

By this time, however, standing before Sansovino, and with strains of Dante and Cervantes at the back of my head, Mr. Justice Holmes' sentence seemed a little blurred. I could see it as largely a hangover from some bourgeois-Victorian point of view, whose culture included an esthetic theory that was muddled by the blood and bile of a stale

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Eliot Norton's Dante translations (as art, so very like a refined British governess explaining Shakespeare in the servants' hall); and had a manly association with such artists as painted pseudo Greece, soft views of mountains, whimsies in water color. To temper the argument, however, I should say that while only the tiniest fool of a poet would even entertain such a distinction between creation and thinking as Mr. Justice Holmes implies, the silliest lawyer would agree with him at once.

The purpose of these remarks of mine, however, so ignoble in the presence of great creation in any line—poets, painters, lawmakers, architects, musicians, actors et cetera—and possible to me, I trust, only in the leisure of a summer day, in streets where powerful and lovely abstract forms provide the nourishment of and bodies for ideas, the purpose is only to introduce a simple theme with regard to the Chinese actor Mei Lan-fang and his visit to America two years ago this spring. The immense success of that venture everybody knows: an unusually large theatre packed to the doors for weeks, a personal impression made by the actor and his companions that was remarkable and widely commented upon. Everybody knows also just now how much sympathy there has been, certainly here in New York and its press, for the Chinese cause. The point I want to make is that the art, the circulation, the manner and quality, of these Chinese artists and gentlemen may connect more than we might think with many people's attitude during the present situation. No doubt the economic elements involved have much to do with the American considerations between Japan and China, though precisely what these economic elements are seems a matter of contradictory theories and facts. We must not forget to allude to the economic nevertheless. Columbus, having shown his motives of finding a new trade route and of bringing back a gold earring or so, was free to spend the rest of his life creating a myth, glorious in dreams, lies and heroism, of himself and what he was like within.

I knew Mr. Mei, and the two scholarly gentlemen with him, Dr. Chang and Professor Chi, very well. I watched, and have watched since, the problem of people's reactions to the Chinese theatre that they brought. Some of it was doubtless town snobbery and following sheep, but much of it was a real admiration for so pure and beautiful and high an art as they offered us. Nor, half apart from art, was the mere expertness and skill of the performers without its keen or gaping admiration. There was another cause of this Chinese success, and that without any doubt. The presence of these three at the numberless receptions, dinners, teas and so on given everywhere in Mr. Mei's honor, both for genuine reasons and for drawing-cards in an overstuffed society, created very shortly a sense of them, of their perfect breeding, merry spirits and tireless willingness to explain their country and their art. Clearly, to everyone, these were scholars, gentlemen, men entirely at home in art, which with them was a pure world complete in itself. The excellent impression thus created carried along to the theatre, and was a real factor in the growing friendliness and perception from audiences.

I not only think Mei Lan-fang the most complete artist I have ever seen in the theatre, fluent in all its forms; he seemed to me the purest spirit I ever met in the arts any-

where, a being completely artistic, expert, soundly human, simple, eager for such new forms and styles as foreign countries might show, but yet never for a moment confused by them; he, Dr. Chang and Professor Chi all understood and knew securely by the most profound intuition that nothing could be of use in China, no progress—if it should turn out to be progress—no new types, no anything, unless it be created anew according to Chinese tradition and the Chinese mind.

Mei Lan-fang had been accustomed to three performances a week; here he was obliged to give eight. He brought forty-five trunks of costumes and a repertory of two hundred pieces; as I remember the line of trunks backstage, three of them had been allowed open, to dress only a small group of plays that must be given over and over to fit our system. He bore this stage strain almost to exhaustion, as he bore the endless entertainments, after his serene life in his own home in Peiping, as a poet, musician, wrestler, dancer, art collector, student of the classics. Before he left, he and his two friends were white-faced with weariness, though I heard them mention it only once. I am trying to indicate the extent to which Mr. Mei and his companions regarded themselves as ambassadors of Chinese culture and the great labor to which they put themselves in this cause. You had only to see a half minute of Mei Lan-fang's in that passage in "The Tiger General" where the murder and hate came for a second on the masklike face, with complete knowledge of great tragic style, of generalized emotion made into fixed images, to know that such a man's idea of life scarcely consisted of endless mass handshaking. Handshaking between China and America was quite another matter. Meanwhile, his strong and exquisite and gentle character was spoken of more and more widely, and is still spoken of. The recollection of all this tact, breeding, intelligence and human friendliness in these Chinese gentlemen and the high art they brought, can do their country no harm.

STARK YOUNG.

Farm Hand

EVERY once in a while I still think about him. I remember clearly that his eyes were greenish-looking. At that time my father owned a small grocery on Kedzie Avenue near the Northwestern tracks and I was about fourteen years old. Right after seven o'clock, when the slight evening rush of business was over, I used to stay alone in the store while my father went home for supper. We lived in a flat a block away and my father didn't take long; he ate quickly and came back and always asked the same question: "Was there anything doing?" Most of the time I had to tell him there wasn't, and after that he'd go and stand in the rear of the store near the stove, his short fat arms behind his back and would remain like that, staring toward the front windows and the street. Business was bad and he was thinking of moving again; he said the neighborhood was becoming played out.

Sometimes I used to force my kid brother to stay in the store with me until my father returned from supper. At that time he was eleven years old and I had a strong in, who'll deliver it?" And he'd look solemnly at me, pucker up his little face as if he were going to begin bawling, but in the end he'd sit quietly on a packing case near the stove and stare toward the front windows, like my father.

A big coal company was down the street at the tracks and around seven o'clock or so the men would get off. I remember how, in the spring and summer, they used to walk past the store—big husky fellows with their coats torn under the arm pits, and if the weather was hot they'd sling their dirty jackets over their shoulders, and where their shirts were torn you could see their shiny, sweaty chests and arms, covered with a fine, black soot. Some of them used to come into the store for chewing-plug or ten-cent smoking tobacco; and that meant that I'd have to walk all around the grocery counter to the tobacco show-case on the other side. So I used to force my kid brother to stand behind the tobacco show-case and when he'd holler I'd say: "Well, I'm breaking you in, what are you kicking about?"

One spring day my brother was out playing ball in a big empty lot near the tracks and pretended he didn't hear me when I stood in the doorway of the store and yelled at him. Pretty soon I got tired of shouting and went to sit on the packing case back near the stove. A few customers came in, all for small sales, and after they left I saw the first few laborers from the coal yards going by, walking with long tired strides, their faces smudged, their eyes red around the rims. Three or four of them came into the store for tobacco and after they were gone the street was quiet again. There was nothing to do, so I sat around and wondered how long my father would keep on owning small grocery stores that did not pay, moving from neighborhood to neighborhood and chaining himself to the petty business from five in the morning to nine at night. And I did not blame my kid brother for not coming when I shouted, but I was sore at him just the same.

After a while I got tired sitting on the packing case and went to stand in the doorway. My father was due in another fifteen minutes or so. From where I stood I could see the freights going by on the Northwestern and every so often I saw brakemen standing on top of moving cars, waving their arms slowly, signaling, and the slow, labored chug of the locomotives was nice to listen to. There were about eight sets of tracks upon the elevation there and the Kedzie Avenue car line went under the dark viaduct below.

I had been standing in the doorway for a while when I saw a man jump out of a moving box-car and begin walking quickly across the tracks. A fast mail train went by and I lost sight of him, but as soon as the mail passed I saw him again, walking over the rails. He reached the edge of the embankment and, taking his time, descending slowly and carefully, he began climbing down the steep, twenty-foot incline toward the street. Even from the distance I could tell there was something ungainly and awkward about him, so I decided he must be a farm hand. He was a big, lanky fellow in overalls and wore a cap.

Across the street was a pool hall and someone there was watching too—a young tough who had already been sent twice to the reformatory at Pontiac, Illinois, and had a bad reputation in the neighborhood. His real name was Mike

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lieve the gang called him that because he had once been involved in a hold-up of a pickle factory on Lake Street and all he got for his pains, according to the report, was a splash of pickle brine on his clothing when he had stumbled over a barrel after tying up and gagging the watchman.

Pickles was standing in the doorway of the pool hall across the street, watching the lanky fellow descending the embankment. When the fellow finally stood upon the street, looking around to get his bearings, I saw Pickles pull his cap a bit lower and start walking up the street, toward the tracks. The tracks were about a half a block away and Pickles began walking rapidly. He was tall and getting beefy and looked a bit comical from the rear. When he came abreast of the fellow who had just climbed down the embankment he stuck his elbow out, striking the man in the side, and began picking an argument. It was an old trick; I had seen it worked many times. The lanky fellow in overalls said nothing for a while; he stood a bit puzzled, his hands dangling, while Pickles grew noisy and quarrelsome. The evening was so quiet I could hear the conversation all the way up the block.

Pretty soon Pickles worked up such a feeling of injustice that he started threatening the fellow and began pushing him around. As he shoved he used his palms, pushing him gently against the chest and hips. That was an old trick too: Pickles was feeling around for the fellow's wallet.

In a little while the lanky fellow began to get frightened and stared up and down the street to see if people were coming. But at seven or seven-thirty in the evening Kedzie Avenue is dead quiet, with only an occasional trolley hurrying up the track.

Then the fellow saw me watching in the doorway and, shoving Pickles aside, made for the store. He tried to walk near the curb, but Pickles kept shoving him against the buildings, using his palms all the while. As they came closer my heart began pounding and I went to stand in the rear of the store, out of sight.

Pretty soon I heard the voices of both of them very clearly. Pickles was still threatening, saying he'd crash someone in the jaw, while the stranger was pleading and whining a little. When they came up to the store the lanky fellow looked around for me, but I was hidden behind a row of shelves, out of sight; through a small space between some canned goods I saw the lean, frightened face of the fellow, searching for me. There was no doubt about it, he was a farm hand fresh from the prairie. He was tanned up; his hair, uncut, stuck out from under his cap, and there was something gawky about him.

Finally Pickles forced him up against one of our plate-glass windows, began shoving again and, when the farm hand objected, smashed the fellow in the jaw. The window shook from the impact and the farm hand howled; he put his hands up to his chin and made a pitiful sound. Then, wheeling quickly, he got away from Pickles and came into the store. I saw how glad he looked as soon as I stepped from behind the rear shelves.

"You got to help me," he said. "That fellow there is after my money, you got to help me."

Pickles stood outside, waiting for the farm hand to come out. I saw him rolling a cigarette.

But the farm hand wouldn't leave. In a few seconds the time he told me, over and over, "You got to help me, you got to help me." As he spoke his eyes bored into mine and I saw they were greenish—small, greenish eyes, shiny from fright.

"You got to help me, you got to do it," he said.

But I knew I wouldn't. I felt it was my duty to help this fellow, but my common sense told me I couldn't do it. If I helped him Pickles would have something on me. I would be slugged one of these dark nights, just as Terry, the milkman, had been slugged for telling the cops which way the fellows had run, and maybe my father's store would be broken into, for vengeance. I thought fast, and though I was filled with a powerful sense of anger against the hoodlum outside, still I decided not to help. My heart was hammering, but I forced my face to remain calm.

At last, staring around the store, the farm hand's eyes rested upon my baseball bat which stood in a corner near the stove, and he suddenly looked determined; his greenish eyes became more shiny than ever.

"Give me that bat," he said. "I'm not afraid of him if I've got that bat in my hands. I'll show him."

"It belongs to my brother," I told him.

"But I got to have it. You can't stand there and see me get beat up and robbed. I got to have it."

"It's not mine," I said. "I can't give it away." He didn't have the courage to come behind the counter and take it.

"But, good Christ, I got to have it," he said. "You got to help me out."

"It belongs to my brother, it's not mine," I told him, trying to get an earnest note into my voice.

The farm hand pleaded with me some more, his small greenish eyes shining at me, and though my heart was pounding for him and I knew I ought to hand over the bat, I stood silent, hating myself. Finally the fellow stopped talking and stared toward the front of the store. Through the glass we saw Pickles waiting, smoking at the curb, his big, beefy back toward us, his fat, powerful neck showing.

"All right," the farm hand said quietly. "I see I'm alone."

"It belongs to my brother," I mumbled.

"You go to hell."

He clamped his long bony jaws together and stood ready to go outside where Pickles was waiting when we heard a trolley coming. We could hear a faint whir of wheels and the trolley wire outside had a tiny, singing sound to it. I looked at the farm hand's face and saw he was thinking fast. When the whir of trolley wheels grew fairly loud, he opened the front door and burst out of the store. Pickles, who had been ready, lunged and caught at the fellow's sleeve, but the farm hand began screaming and finally wrenched himself free. Then he began running with all his might, racing with the street car. By this time the trolley was in the middle of the block and was going fast, swaying from side to side. Pickles started after the fellow. I saw the farm hand reach out, grab the rear rail of the trolley and watched as he was swung violently aboard. For a while the lower half of his body dragged, his shoes scraping the street, and it looked as though he would roll off the rushing trolley, when the conductor, looking startled, hur-

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him aboard safely. Pickles stopped running and cut down an alley.

A few minutes later, when my kid brother came back from the ball game, my heart was still hammering wildly and I was still hating myself. I went to stand in the rear of the store and clasped my hands behind, like my father, but my fingers felt cold and clammy. As soon as my brother came into the store I began yelling at him, asking him why he hadn't been around. "I was busy, I had to leave the store alone while I delivered an order!" I shouted, lying. And when he came within range, looking sorry, I struck out and slapped his face soundly with the flat of my palm. I struck him so hard his hands leapt up to his cheek and he began screaming. Now I was more sorry than ever and didn't know what to do. I looked sore, shouted, and threatened to hit him again.

And just then my father came in. My kid brother hushed and became dead quiet. He hid behind the counter until his eyes were dry, and only when we were leaving the store together did my father notice the reddish welt on the kid's cheek.

"I've got a bite, something just bit me," my kid brother explained, and my father let it go at that.

We turned down the alley, taking the short cut home, and before we reached the flat I gave my brother my knife with the broken blade, and I saw how he looked proudly at me, but that very night, when he was asleep, I got out of bed and took it from his trouser pocket, and in the morning when he started bawling I told him I knew nothing about it. ALBERT HALPER.

Is Planning Possible?

The following statement is taken from the dissenting opinion of Mr. Justice Brandeis in the case of the New State Ice Company vs. Ernest A. Liebmann, made public on March 21. Mr. Justice Stone joined in the opinion. The title used is, of course, The New Republic's.—THE EDITORS.

THE PEOPLE of the United States are now confronted with an emergency more serious than war. Misery is widespread, in a time, not of scarcity, but of overabundance. The long continued depression has brought unprecedented unemployment, a catastrophic fall in commodity prices and a volume of economic losses which threatens our financial institutions. Some people believe that the existing conditions threaten even the stability of the capitalistic system. Economists are searching for the causes of this disorder and are reëxamining the bases of our industrial structure. Business men are seeking possible remedies. Most of them realize that failure to distribute widely the profits of industry has been a prime cause of our present plight. But rightly or wrongly, many persons think that one of the major contributing causes has been unbridled competition. Increasingly, doubt is expressed whether it is economically wise, or morally right, that men should be permitted to add to the producing facilities of an industry which is already suffering from overcapacity. In justification of that doubt, men point to the excess capacity of our productive facilities resulting from their vast expansion without corresponding increase in the consumptive capacity of the people. They assert that through improved methods of manufacture, made possible by advances in science and invention and vast accumulation of capital, our industries had become capable of producing from 30 to 100 percent more than was consumed even in days of vaunted prosperity; and that the present capacity will, for a long time, exceed the needs of business. All agree that irregularity in employment—the greatest of our evils—cannot be overcome unless production and consumption are more nearly balanced. Many insist there must be some form of economic control. There are plans for proration. There are many proposals for stabilization. And some thoughtful men of wide business experience insist that all projects for stabilization and proration must prove futile unless, in some way, the equivalent of the certificate of public convenience and necessity is made a prerequisite to embarking new capital in an industry in which the capacity already exceeds the production schedules.

Whether that view is sound nobody knows. The objections to the proposal are obvious and grave. The remedy might bring evils worse than the present disease. The obstacles to success seem insuperable. The economic and social sciences are largely uncharted seas. We have been none too successful in the modest essays in economic control already entered upon. The new proposal involves a vast extension of the area of control. Merely to acquire the knowledge essential as a basis for the exercise of this multitude of judgments would be a formidable task; and each of the thousands of these judgments would call for some measure of prophecy. Even more serious are the obstacles to success inherent in the demands which execution of the project would make upon human intelligence and upon the character of men. Man is weak and his judgment is at best fallible.

Yet the advances in the exact sciences and the achievements in invention remind us that the seemingly impossible sometimes happens. There are many men now living who were in the habit of using the age-old expression: "It is as impossible as flying." The discoveries in physical science, the triumphs in invention, attest the value of the process of trial and error. In large measure, these advances have been due to experimentation. In those fields experimentation has, for two centuries, been not only free but encouraged. Some people assert that our present plight is due, in part, to the limitations set by courts upon experimentation in the fields of social and economic science; and to the discouragement to which proposals for betterment there have been subjected otherwise. There must be power in the states and the nation to remold, through experimentation, our economic practices and institutions to meet changing social and economic needs. I cannot believe that the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment, or the states which ratified it, intended to deprive us of the power to correct the evils of technological unemployment and excess productive capacity which have attended progress in the useful arts.

To stay experimentation in things social and economic is a grave responsibility. Denial of the right to experiment may be fraught with serious consequences to the nation. It is one of the happy incidents of the federal system that a single courageous state may, if its citizens choose, serve

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as a laboratory; and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country. This Court has the power to prevent an experiment. We may strike down the statute which embodies it on the ground that, in our opinion, the measure is arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable. We have power to do this, because the due-process clause has been held by the Court applicable to matters of substantive law as well as to matters of procedure. But in the exercise of this high power, we must be ever on our guard, lest we erect our prejudices into legal principles. If we would guide by the light of reason, we must let our minds be bold. LOUIS D. BRANDEIS.

CORRESPONDENCE

Einstein and Spiritualism

SIR: Mr. C. Hartley Grattan seems to be more hurt than surprised by the ingenuousness and frankness of Professor Albert Einstein in admitting he was both baffled and interested by what probably was the most elementary thaumaturgy on the part of Miss Gene Dennis, who claims to be "America's foremost psychic." Mr. Grattan's article is indicative of the attitude of mind with which too many of our "intellectuals" regard contemporary scientists. In their frantic desire for absolute authorities these intelligentsia would force unwilling scientists into "sane and rational" straitjackets and raise them on pedestals where they might be supported "*consistently and always* in harmony" with their positions as great scientists. They could speak only *ex cathedra* and their attitude of mind should at all times be that of "corrosive skepticism." Mr. Grattan would aggravate the very situation he deplores. He would have us take with the utmost seriousness every comment his idols make. If Dr. Compton expresses a dislike for figs and all Smyrna is impoverished, the responsibility is his and not ours for aping him.

After all, physicists do not pass the laws which they discover. Their laws are but the generalizations of experience. When their experience is meager, their comments are not to be taken too seriously. On the other hand, their right to make observations and to live a normal life should not be questioned. Mr. Grattan frets that his idols have feet of clay. He should rejoice that their heads are not of the same material.

Swarthmore, Pa. T. J. K.

Frozen Assets

SIR: Advocates of rugged individualism rather than any sort of planning or coöperation should drive through the South and up through the West Coast states. Beginning in the Carolinas and extending clear into New Mexico are fields of unpicked cotton that tell a mute story of more cotton than could be sold for enough, even, to pay the cost of picking. Vineyards with grapes still unpicked, orchards of olive trees hanging full of rotting fruit and oranges being sold at less than the cost of production.

Going through the oil fields, the same condition is apparent. Out of thousands of oil wells, with their forests of expensive derricks and pumps, very few are in operation. Nor is this all. Shops that cover acres of ground and that have machine equipment running into the millions, are practically idle.

All of this represents part of the frozen assets of the country. Overhead expenses go on just the same and are not helping the return of prosperity. This is not only a sheer waste of capital and energy, but, especially in the oil fields, of natural resources as well.

Some of the results of this unbridled competition are pitiful. Eggs are retailing at twenty to twenty-five cents a dozen, and even though we have a surplus of grain, the egg rancher can hardly pay his grain bill and many ranchers are killing off the hens. In the North, peach orchards that were planted in high hopes of profit a few years ago are being cut down on account of the oversupply.

Salary Cuts Among Social Workers

SIR: The letter in The New Republic of February 17, signed Sonia Ginsberg, representing the Association of Federation Social Workers, registers a vigorous protest against salary cuts. Among the inadequately paid workers are included "salaries ranging from $3,000 to about $25,000."

Considering the number of the unemployed and the large sums of both public and private funds necessary to keep them from actual starvation, would it be in order to ask about how many social workers are struggling along on "salaries ranging from $3,000 to about $25,000" and by whom these salaries are paid?

Brownsville, Pa. CHARLES W. BOWMAN.

SIR: May we point out to Mr. Bowman that the social workers who vigorously protested against wage cuts are not included in the group of $3,000-and-up salaries. The average wage of social workers is well below $2,000 and can be more safely put at $1,500 per year.

Mr. Bowman may rest assured that the bulk of social workers are not vitally concerned with maintaining intact a salary of $25,000 per year or one anywhere near it. We are, however, greatly concerned with conserving the standard of living and wages of all workers, whether employed in industry or in social-service organizations. SONIA GINSBERG,

Chairman, Publicity Committee,

New York City. Association of Federation Social Workers.

Skirmish of Epithets

SIR: My attention has been drawn to a notice of my lectures on "Makers of Europe" in your issue of October 28. As I read it I murmured, *"Bos locutus est."* Its weighty and oracular brevity leaves little but riddles in the path of the merely human author. From this, and from a review of an earlier book in your columns, I gather that to be "a good deal of a Christian" is there regarded as a terrible charge. It is not for me to estimate its truth, though indeed I shall be very glad if it can be proved; but I am puzzled to know why it is thought to be relevant to chapters concerned entirely with four authors of ancient Rome. Unless, indeed, my critic is one of our Fundamentalist friends from Tennessee whose blood runs cold at the idea that Cicero and Vergil can have contributed anything to Christian ethics.

I am equally puzzled by the remark that my "comprehension of political economy is naïve"; because, so far as I know, there is no single remark in the book that can be called economic. Unless, indeed, the reviewer refers to the commonplace of history, that the reform which established good government in the Roman Empire was the assignment of fixed stipends and a settled career to the governors of the provinces. If your reviewer's reading of the ancient authorities, which no doubt is profound, has led him to a different conclusion, I am content to leave your readers to choose between the learned and the "naïve" point of view.

University of California, at Los Angeles. R. S. CONWAY.

SIR: Professor Conway's letter so neatly illustrates what I mean by a "naïve" point of view that comment from me is superfluous. I called it an innocent conception to assume that any four men were, in any substantial sense, "makers of Europe," and when Professor Conway, in developing this theme, as he himself points out, makes not one single economic allusion, all I can say is, "Precisely!" I am sorry he does not realize the relevance of his Christian bias; I think the reader deserves to be apprised of it, so that he may know better what to expect. I think Christians are all right, especially real ones; only I think all four of these eminent pagans somewhat more enlightened than Professor Conway, who states his willingness to profess and call himself Christian more forcefully than he demonstrates it, especially in the matter of forgiving his enemies and turning the other cheek. I cheerfully concede his superior erudition: he knows lots more than I do about Caesar, Cicero, Horace, Vergil; all I claim is that I understand them better. I also less cheerfully concede him superiority in epithet; if I apprehend his meaning correctly, he calls me a dumb ox, whereas I only call him a Christian. Maybe at that both of us might be wrong.

R. H

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A Note on Donne

A Garland for John Donne, 1631-1931, edited by Theodore Spencer. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 202 pages. $2.50.

JOHN DONNE'S reputation has risen so suddenly that writers born since 1900 may look back to the time when he was a name in "The Oxford Book of English Verse" at the head of seven poems, two of which we now know that he did not write. The present volume, edited by Mr. Theodore Spencer for the tercentenary of his death, is both a memorial and an inquiry into the causes of his contemporary influence. A remarkable feature of that influence is the uncertainty of its meaning; it is not usually so in the case of a poet three hundred years dead. Although Donne's elements of style, the learned images and conceits and the conversational tone, had a distinct effect on Cowley and Crashaw, and radically influenced Dryden, he was admired in the eighteenth century as a prodigy of futile perversity, of "learning" gone astray. It has remained for our own age to understand the integrity of his style, the seriousness of his impulse, and to reconsider sympathetically the external properties of his verse from the point of view of its underlying intellectual problems. This volume owes its existence to the belief that many of Donne's problems are our own. For the first time he is being felt as a true contemporary.

The eight essays are admirably distributed over the two kinds of critical problem that a great poet of the past inevitably creates. There are five papers on historical questions. Mr. Spencer himself has written, in "Donne and His Age," a study of the intellectual climate in which Donne lived: although he suggests more problems than he can solve in so brief a space, his discussion of the revolutionary effect of the sixteenth-century "picture of the physical world" on moral ideas is a valuable contribution to Elizabethan criticism. Mr. John Sparrow's "The Date of Donne's Travels" reviews a difficult and perhaps insoluble problem of the poet's biography; incidentally it throws some light on the origin of a large part of his imagery—whether certain geographical allusions were imaginary and bookish, or were drawn from observation. "A Note on Donne the Preacher," by Mr. John Hayward, presents a side of Donne that would have only a minor historical value had he never written his verse. Mrs. Evelyn M. Simpson's analysis of the "Paradoxes and Problems" brings out the early influence of Martial, an influence that Mr. Spencer finds general in the 1590's and not peculiar to Donne; Mrs. Simpson's paper is chiefly valuable for its emphasis on his early "interest in science." But here, just as Mr. Eliot warns us that Donne's skepticism was not like ours, being mainly an uncertainty about the right terms of faith, Mrs. Simpson might well have distinguished between science as we know it and Donne's "interest" in the new cosmologists, Copernicus and Kepler. This was rather an imaginative anxiety about the limits of consciousness and the bearing of that question on the scholastic conception of body and soul, which Donne always presents in the terminology of St. Thomas. Far from having a scientific attitude towards the problem, he employs it, not for its truth apart from his own personality, but as the dramatic framework for his individual emotion.

This is the very center of Donne, a fact that Mr. Mario Praz clearly establishes in his essay "Donne's Relation to the Poetry of His Time." Mr. Praz says: "Donne's technique stands in the same relation to the average technique of Renaissance poetry as that of baroque to that of Renaissance painting. His sole preoccupation is with the whole effect." And back of the whole effect, a quality that modern criticism knows as "emotional tone" or esthetic form, is the effort to render precisely the individual experience. "He was," writes Mr. Praz, "like a lawyer choosing the fittest arguments for the case in hand; not a searcher after a universally valid truth." The fittest arguments are the fittest images and tropes by which to set forth, not a truth, but a complete emotion. The terms are not the terms of truth, to which the individual experience must be subordinated, or for the sake of which the personal experience is trimmed down, and all the implications rejected that they do not contain. They are rather occasional indications of an experience that is not implicit in them, to be dropped when they have served their purpose. The scholastic subtleties of "The Extasie" serve the same esthetic end as the neutral conceit of the compasses—neutral because neither true nor false with respect to the inherent character of the subject—in "A Valediction: forbidding mourning."

This is the modernism of Donne. Mr. Praz's essay is the link between the two problems of Donne—his place in his own time and his value for us. Here Mr. T. S. Eliot, prophesying the speedy decline of Donne's new reputation, leaves the future ominously obscure; it is the part of caution. Mr. Eliot's belief that Donne's prose—the sermons, "Biathanatos," the "Paradoxes and Problems"—is ready for oblivion, and quickly, is not to be questioned; the sermons have been popular among those who wish to be in the Donne fashion without taking the trouble to read the verse. But that the "Songs and Sonets," the "Elegies," most of the "Satires" and the "Divine Poems," will not continue to be read for an indefinite time is an opinion harder to maintain.

"His learning," says Mr. Eliot, "is just information suffused with emotion . . . rather a humorous shuffling of the pieces; and we are inclined to read our own more conscious awareness of the apparent unrelatedness of things into the mind of Donne."

How much longer this "unrelatedness of things" will continue to be the background of poetry; whether it is not by now an emotional convention out of which minor poetic heresies, like Imagism or the more recent Objectivism, will at intervals appear; whether the local excitement of sensation will indefinitely obscure the formal qualities of the Spenserian-Miltonic type of verse—these are questions that Mr. Spencer's memorial to Donne asks, but does not answer. The answers contain the future of poetry.

Why we are concerned with the future of any art is a mystery that Donne and his contemporaries could not have understood. But the difference between Donne and our age is not, in this respect, a radical one, and there was a definite place in Mr. Spencer's book for an essay on the rise of the historical consciousness.

The point of view of Mr. George Williamson, in his excellent paper, "Donne and Today," falls into two parts that tend to undermine each other. On the one hand, he states abstract analogies between Donne and some living poets, which would be interesting if true, but on the other, his quotations from Eliot, Read, Ransom and the late Elinor Wylie offer as little evidence of the essential influence of Donne as one might derive from Tennyson. (Mrs. Ramsay, in "Donne's Relation to Philosophy," quotes stanzas from Donne and "In Memoriam" in order to distinguish two uses of "philosophy" in verse; but the lines of

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Tennyson come within Mr. Williamson's formula for Donne: "One may say that Donne's emotion is commonly given 'conceptual' form, but not that he is a philosophical poet.")

Mr. Eliot remarks that Donne first made it possible to think in English lyrical verse; but it does not follow that our thinking in verse is Donne's kind of thought. We are actually nearer to Tennyson. What little thinking there is in modern verse has the general character of historical thinking—"And all the wars have dwindled since Troy fell." Its framework is the fashionable cultural cycle, or the awareness of the "pastness" of the past as in the case of Mr. Archibald MacLeish; the vulgarity of the present and the purity of the past are the framework of Mr. John Crowe Ransom's irony. Even Mr. Jeffers performs a fusion of literary psychology with a fictitious primitivism that places him in the historical consciousness. Although Mr. Ezra Pound's method is a cunning imitation of the pre-historical view that seized past and present as a naïve whole, the "Cantos" is a monument to the historical mentality. There is none of this explicitly in Donne. There is, so far as I know, only the slightest evidence, in seventeenth-century poetry, of a sense of historical rise-and-fall affecting the moral temper of individuals. Milton's Latin poem, "Naturam non pati senium," argues that nature does not inwardly decay; civilization apart from nature is not mentioned; and the poem ends with the Christian myth: *Ingentique rogo flagrabit machina mundi.* The question was a frequent subject of controversy in the universities, and Milton must have felt its latent hostility to his own settled belief in the relation between a permanent human nature and his perfect divine order.

It is this perfect divine order that makes Milton's mythology possible. It is the threat to such an order from the direction of the "new philosophy" which "calls all in doubt," the new cosmology, that compelled Donne to ignore the popular pastoral convention of his time; nor could he rest securely upon the more pretentious classical or Christian mythology. These imaginative structures, to describe them in the lowest terms, were by habit or in essence involved in the medieval system. Mr. Williamson remarks: "Although mythology is banished from his verse, medieval philosophy and Renaissance science take its place, in fact become his mythology." The distinction between mere abstract ideas and a mythology is extremely important in the study of Donne, and I believe Mr. Williamson misses a capital point. Dante could afford to be philosophical; the terms were a system that he acknowledged as truth. But it is different with Donne; the vocabulary is merely that, and it lacks the ultimate, symbolic character of a myth. It is only a step from this lawyerlike use of ingenious terms to the intricacy of personal sensation as the center of consciousness. And from this it is one more step, for the philosophical egoist, to the dramatization of oneself against the background of society or history. It is a step that Donne could not take, but doubtless would take were he alive today.

There was the mythological, pastoral school begun by Wyatt and Surrey, and Nicholas Grimald, improved by Sydney and Spenser, and perfected at a single stroke by Milton. There was the dramatic, introspective school which, whether in the lyric or on the stage, centered in the individual sensibility. In the non-dramatic poets of this type, of whom Donne is the great figure before Dryden, the poet himself becomes the dramatic character: Mr. Spencer finds an interesting analogy between Donne and Hamlet's philosophical egoism of inaction; and the poet's ideas, now the framework of intense excitement, are pitted against one another like characters in a play.

And there lies the nature of the "conceit." It is an idea not essential to the subject, elaborated beyond the usual stretch of metaphor into the supporting structure of a long passage or even an entire poem. It may be torn away from its original meaning, like the Angels in Donne's "Elegie XI," and yet remain the vehicle of "poetic truth," that is to say, of heightened emotion in the poet's dramatization of his own personality. From this method it is but a step to Dryden and the eighteenth century, the rise of the historical consciousness, and to ourselves. It is the peculiar fascination of Donne that he presents the problem of personal poetry in its simplest terms. There is the simple awareness, complicated at the surface by the immense resources of a gigantic mind, of frustration and bewilderment—to which we have added the frustration due to historical relativity. The opposite of this attitude is Milton. And unless it will again be possible for men to give themselves up to a self-contained, objective system of truths, the principles of Donne, whether we know him or not, will continue to be our own.

ALLEN TATE.

Little Caesar

I Saw Hitler! by Dorothy Thompson. *New York: Farrar and Rinehart. 36 pages, illustrated. $1.*

Hitlerism: The Iron Fist in Germany, by Nordicus. New York: The Mohawk Press. 245 pages. $3.

"IMAGINE," says Dorothy Thompson, "that in America an orator with the tongue of the late Mr. Bryan and the histrionic powers of Aimee MacPherson, combined with the publicity gifts of Edward Bernays and Ivy Lee, should manage to unite all the farmers, with all the white-collar unemployed, all the people with salaries under $3,000 a year who have lost their savings in bank collapses and the stock market and are being pressed for payments on the icebox and the radio, the louder evangelical preachers, the American Legion, the D.A.R., the Ku Klux Klan, the W.C.T.U., Matthew Woll, Senator Borah and Henry Ford—imagine that, and you will have some idea of what the Hitler movement in Germany means."

It does not, as Miss Thompson says, make sense. The Hitler movement as portrayed in one of the most brilliant pieces of journalism of recent times, "I Saw Hitler!" is the hysterical insanity of the defeated. Imagine an impossible program which advocates the confiscation or nationalization of the great combines, while being supported by them!—which promises high prices for farm produce, low prices for manufactured goods, and sorely needed housing to the peasants, steady employment and wages to the unemployed, power and racial superiority to the middle class—a program which denies reparations to France and ignores what France is going to do, with an arrogant "Let the Fench march! Negro France can't prevail against free Germany!"—and further than this, a program based on revenge, on hatred of the Jew, on the promise that heads are going to roll—and you have an idea of the doctrines advanced by a party for which eleven million Germans voted at the last election.

As for the leader of that party, "When I walked into Adolf Hitler's salon," says Dorothy Thompson, "I was convinced that I was meeting the future dictator of Germany. In something less than fifty seconds I was quite sure that I was not. It took just about that time to

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measure the startling insignificance of this man who has set the world agog. He is formless, almost faceless, a man whose countenance is a caricature, a man whose framework seems cartilaginous, without bones. He is inconsequential, and voluble, ill poised, insecure. He is the very prototype of the little mad." He is, she says, vacillating and insecure; as he sees power approaching, he shifts back from his defiant stand of a brief time before. The book is a vivid portrayal of millions bedeviled in defeat turning to a little man, like themselves, who promises them everything—but first of all, to lead them out of bondage, especially the bondage of the French and the Jews, to an impossible Promised Land of security and power.

Neither as brilliant nor as flexible, Nordicus writes with the authority of one familiar with the German scene. In "Hitlerism: The Iron Fist in Germany," he fills out with far greater detail the mad outline of the Hitler venture. Especially interesting is his account of the organization of the Storm Troops; equally valuable is his picture gallery of the Hitler lieutenants. The two books together are more than a contribution to contemporary history; they are a picture of a nation in the throes of a psychological seizure, a country where a futile showman plays cunningly upon the worst tendencies of mankind.

MARY HEATON VORSE.

"Attaquez!"

Foch: The Man of Orleans, by B. H. Liddell Hart. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 492 pages. $4.

GENERAL FOCH was nearly sixty-three years old when the Great War engulfed Europe. At an age when most men are looking forward to retirement from active labor, his labors only began. And within a few weeks his name became a worldwide legend, a symbol of the invincible spirit of France and of her martial genius. The First Marne made him a hero; 1918 made him one of the great captains of history. Such is the prevailing opinion.

Liddell Hart's career also began in 1914, when as a youth of nineteen he left Cambridge to join the British army. When the Armistice was signed, he was a master of the theory and history of war, recognized as such by the British as well as the French and German military authorities. In the book before us, which is a biography of Foch as well as a history of a considerable part of the War, the young master passes judgment on the old one.

Captain Hart refutes the popular legend at all points. He contends that at the First Marne, Foch struck in a void, and that the battle was won by others, principally Gallieni, to whom Joffre refused due acknowledgment because he was jealous of his designated successor. He shows that before the War and throughout its course, up to 1918, Foch was a devotee of the offensive theory of warfare, although modern weapons, particularly the machine gun, favor the defense; that he laid exclusive stress on the moral factor, the will to victory, and ignored or underrated the mechanical potencies and necessities of modern warfare; that he was given to overrating the strategically desirable and ignoring the tactically practicable, and thereby failed on more than one occasion to divine Ludendorff's intentions; that though he was absorbed in problems of high strategy, he would invariably order his subordinates to hold their ground at all costs, and seemed oblivious to the arts of maneuver and surprise, by which all the great captains of history achieved their greatest victories; that even after four years of failure had finally taught him to adopt a more flexible strategy—to strike a succession of blows at unexpected points, instead of hammering away at the one immovable point—he would tend to fall back into the old method; that final victory came only because of the American army and General Tank; and that as Allied Generalissimo, Foch really never was a Commander-in-Chief, who could expect implicit obedience from his subordinates, the national commanders, but remained to the end that which he was designated at the beginning—the coördinator of Allied strategy, not its sole originator.

The biographer does not confine himself to these general criticisms, for which he offers abundant proof; he also goes into a detailed analysis of special operations, and points out Foch's mistakes. Among these, there is one that is of interest to Americans. For Captain Hart believes that Pershing's failure to accomplish all that was expected of him is to be ascribed mainly to the diversion of the principal American effort from the St. Mihiel sector to the Meuse-Argonne, a diversion ordered by Foch at the suggestion of Haig.

Granting the truth of all these criticisms, what remains of Foch's glory? "The Man of Orleans," answers the biographer—the modern counterpart of the Maid, intuition rather than intellect, the inspiring faith, the indomitable resolve, the will to victory. And it seems to us that at least some of the faults pointed out by the English critic are explicable by the general situation as much as by Foch's intellectual limitations. To underrate the mechanics of modern warfare was, no doubt, a grave error, but to lay foremost stress on morale was made necessary by the mental depression that had taken hold of the French after 1870. Likewise, to hold on to a piece of ground at all costs is, in general, a senseless procedure—campaigns and wars are not won in that way; but in 1914, and again in 1918, the Germans had penetrated so far into the heart of France, that to give further ground meant to surrender Paris and shatter the nation's morale. There are imponderables in war as in politics, and they sway the leaders as well as the rank and file.

HERMAN SIMPSON.

Polishing Our Bicycles

The Devil in the Flesh, by Raymond Radiguet. Translated by Kay Boyle. New York: Harrison Smith. $2.50.

THE WAR, in Raymond Radiguet's first novel, figures as a kind of unexpected holiday, offering advantages to schoolboys similar to those resulting from the burning of the schoolhouse. Something is happening somewhere in the distance, and the children are excited as at anything unfamiliar, at the wine and flowers and fireworks; but whatever it is, it is no more strange, no more inexplicable, than anything else. Presently they grow a little bored with the War; it lasts so long. When they are stimulated again, it is at defeat, for it seems they must make a journey; they get up at dawn, and set about polishing their bicycles. One little girl, whose bicycle is smaller, is tormented by the others because she won't be able to keep up with them; the thought fills her with dismay, and she begins to cry. "They would have burned Paris. . . . The thing that terrorized Europe had become their one hope." So Radiguet's hero fathoms the nature of their childish patriotism, and the brief fable illustrates his method.

Both "The Devil in the Flesh" and "The Count's Ball"

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are amplifications and adaptations of the legend of Nero's behavior at the burning of Rome, except that Radiguet added another touch by making his characters seriously and morally concerned over relatively inconsequential affairs, rather than perversely frivolous at the spectacle of disaster. They live as they would live in normal times, chiefly disturbed at their relationships with other people, and it is the reader who establishes the contrast between their absorption in their small matters, in their trivial jealousies and vague disappointments, and the great collective death struggles going on off-stage. Thus, in "The Count's Ball," the novel which Radiguet finished just before his death, at the age of twenty—or was it twenty-two?—complicated questions of taste and deportment, speculations on moral values, on "purity," on the duties of friendship, are suddenly contrasted, in the last chapter, with reality as embodied in the figure of a refugee from the Russian revolution. The absorbing task of polishing one's bicycle is placed in historical perspective.

The device is even clearer in "The Devil in the Flesh," which has been made an excellent piece of English prose in Kay Boyle's translation. Radiguet is said to have been between sixteen and eighteen when he wrote this novel. It is not "the work of a boy who has lived through many of the experiences of manhood," as Aldous Huxley says in his brief introduction; rather it is the work of a boy to whom the distinction between youth and manhood was too obscure to be profitably investigated, and who developed a technique for giving his youthful experiences a degree of universal validity. The story itself is unpretentious: a simple account of a love affair between a fifteen-year-old boy and a young wife whose husband is at the front. The hero's father cannot find his son's conduct important enough to merit a very severe reprimand; the hero cannot consider Marthe's death or life, or his own, or the impression they make on the community, of very great moment. He describes these events with wit and with a kind of stylized analysis that suggests a modernization of "Adolphe"; but without the off-stage thunder Radiguet so insinuatingly suggests, "The Devil in the Flesh" would be little more than a graceful and unimportant idyll.

ROBERT CANTWELL.

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Book Notes

Biography and Memoirs

IN MY END IS MY BEGINNING, by Maurice Baring. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 314 pages. $3.75.*

In writing a biography of Mary, Queen of Scots, Maurice Baring is well aware that he is not traveling alone. Queen Mary is a chronic temptation for biographers, all the more so because of persistent rumors to the effect that she was beautiful and of an amorous disposition. Mr. Baring has made an original experiment with the well known facts of her career by retelling her romantic story four times, through the lips of the four Marys, the Queen's ladies in waiting. Repetition, in this instance, makes the author's case for the Queen a forceful argument in her defense; but it also subjects the reader to occasional arid stretches of already familiar narrative. Mr. Baring's colorful prose, often brilliant and interesting in itself, cannot bear the burden that he has imposed upon it.

STALIN: The Career of a Fanatic, by Essad-Bey. *Translated from the German by Huntley Peterson. New York: The Viking Press. 398 pages. $3.50.*

"Essad-Bey" is the pseudonym of a man named Nussbaum or Nussenbaum, who was born in the Caucasus and is now a successful Berlin journalist. He has a talent for surrounding modern characters with an atmosphere of barbaric legend. In spite of his Turkish pseudonym, his attitude toward Asia is rather contemptuous: Asia means to him not much more than Jenghiz Khan and Tamerlane. The Soviet Union, too, means Jenghiz Khan and Tamerlane—an extraordinary attitude toward a country which, instead of destroying cities in order to reduce the cultural level to that of nomad herdsmen, as was done by the Mongol conquerors, is busily engaged in erecting new centers of industry and culture. But Mr. Nussenbaum is thinking in different terms; he sees only the dictatorship, and it must be said that his interpretation of Stalin's despotic character in terms of Caucasian conditions is very adroitly handled. For the rest, the book is full of breath-taking adventures and capital stories, some of which may be true.

General

AN OUTLINE OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE, edited by William Rose. *New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1,120 pages. $5.*

This is a truly imposing publication, by its comprehensiveness and general excellence, as well as by its great bulk and comparatively low price. There are twenty-four articles or treatises on as many subjects—from mathematics and physics through biology, psychology, anthropology, history, economics, etc., to philosophy, literary criticism, art and music. Several of the contributors are men of international reputation, like Sir J. Arthur Thomson, R. R. Marett, C. G. Seligman, G. D. H. Cole (who contributes two articles) and others. There is only one article that falls below the otherwise uniformly high scientific standard, the one on the "Idea of God," which is not scientific in any sense of the word, but theological.

Public Questions

THE GREAT PACIFIC WAR, by Hector Bywater. *Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 317 pages. $2.50.*

This book, which at the present moment seems much less fantastic than it did when it was first published seven years ago, describes an imaginary war between this country and Japan. The

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war, which Mr. Bywater convincingly outlines in great detail, is a naval conflict in which this country, owing to its lack of naval bases in the western Pacific and to the vast distance separating us from our Pacific possessions, must assume a purely defensive role. The Philippines, Guam and our other possessions are easily captured by the Japanese. This country recaptures them only by outmaneuvering the enemy's fleet commanders, our own being, in Mr. Bywater's patriotic imagination, a more highly intelligent species of human beings. The book ends with the United States triumphant, but with the remark that "war is never a paying proposition from any national point of view, and the great conflict of which the salient phases are described in the foregoing pages has proved, in its material aspects at least, scarcely less disastrous to victors than to vanquished."

SUCCESSFUL LIVING IN THIS MACHINE AGE, by Edward A. Filene, in collaboration with Charles W. Wood. *New York: Simon and Schuster. 274 pages. $2.50.*

A successful business man who has been interested in virtually all of the progressive business movements here outlines, with the aid of a former economic radical who has become a convert to the faith of modern industry, the revolutionary consequences of mass production. It makes necessary higher wages and lower prices, it forces a consideration of unemployment, it promises everything which Socialism and Communism ever thought they could achieve, it creates its own beauty, it even revolutionizes religion. But of course it creates problems which cannot be solved unless business men adopt the sort of ideas which a successful working of mass production demands. It is the belief of the authors of this book that if they will only do so, no further revolution will be necessary. Political intervention the authors disparage. A private business, they think, is not private at all, because the public can at any moment control it by ceasing to buy its products. And so the brave brew of sound ideas with which the authors start evaporates in a sort of Christian Science faith in the self-sufficiency of profit-seeking business if it will only think correctly.

The Social Sciences

THE BALANCE OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS. Vol. II: Eastern and Southern Europe, by Robert R. Kuczynski. *Washington, D. C.: The Brookings Institute. 182 pages. $2.*

The first volume of this work, dealing with western and northern Europe, showed that the birth rate in those countries was so low that population was definitely pointing toward a future decline, even where it was not already declining. The second volume shows that similar conditions prevail in Austria, Esthonia and Latvia. In Poland the population is still growing, but at a slower pace. In Italy the slowing down is more marked than in Poland and, if fertility and mortality should continue to develop at the same rate for another decade, the population will no longer hold its own. European Russia has the highest birth rate of any country in Europe. Figures compiled in 1896-97 showed that the average woman gave birth to seven children; in 1926-27, the number was reduced to 5.6; but, since mortality had greatly decreased, the trend of population was as strongly upward as before.

THE PLACE OF PREJUDICE IN MODERN CIVILIZATION, by Sir Arthur Keith. *New York: The John Day Company. 55 pages. $1.*

The particular prejudice with which the distinguished anthropologist here concerns himself is national patriotism. He bids us cherish and preserve it as an invaluable heritage from the tribal stage, when the struggle of tribes for survival was a most potent factor in the evolution of races. He identifies national antagonism with race prejudice, and regards both as innate traits, implanted in man by Nature for her own purposes—racial differentiation, evolution and progress. Hence, to do away with war would be running counter to Nature's design, and would lead to universal racial intermixture. The price of progress is interracial competition and international war. This argument is but another misapplication of the Darwinian theory to society, and consists essentially in a number of gratuitous assumptions; *e.g.*, that tribes and nations are races, or that civilized society does not [illegible] are identical, or that social evolution is governed by the same laws and leads to the same results as natural evolution. When modern nationalism (ancient nationalism had an entirely different origin and evolution) is examined in its historical concreteness, as opposed to the abstract quasi-Darwinian point of view, it is found to have had a definite beginning in quite recent times, to have assumed various forms as well as various degrees of intensity, and to be verging nowadays toward a decline. Notwithstanding the World War and the consequent creation of so many petty national states, the dominant trend manifests itself on the one hand in imperialism, and on the other in internationalism—political, cultural, capitalistic and proletarian.

Fiction

HORSE IN THE MOON, by Luigi Pirandello. *Translated with an introduction by Samuel Putnam. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.*

Pirandello the short-story writer is more casual and graceful than Pirandello the playwright. The metaphysical arguments so evident in his dramas are here, for the most part, implied rather than discussed. Only in three stories out of the dozen in the book does he take the liberty to play directly with his abstractions. Indirectly, they have the effect of endowing his characters and plots with the sweeping aspect of universals; but these universals are far removed from the austerity of philosophical thought, and are elucidated with a warmth as intimate and brilliant as Sicilian sunshine. Of the more conventional stories in this collection, "Adriana Takes a Trip," "The Light Across the Way" and "Sunlight and Shadow" are Pirandello at his best.

THE SEVEN STARS, by André Malvil. *New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.*

A Parisian dandy, cynical in his attitude toward life and death, suddenly becomes obsessed with the fear of death when the woman he loves dies. He becomes less gay, more thinking, and spends his time at numerous bedsides watching friends and acquaintances expire. Eventually he finds consolation in the idea of Faith—so much so that he renounces all worldly connections and lives as a Catholic hermit on a barren piece of Irish shore.

Contributors

Herbert S. Wood, a certified public accountant, who for the last twelve years has been an income-tax practitioner, was formerly assistant chief of the United States Bureau of Efficiency.

Sheila Hibben, who was on the staff of The New Freeman, is at present writing a book on regional cooking, to be entitled "The Americana Cook Book."

Charles Norman, author of "Poems," published in 1929, and "The Bright World," is assistant night editor of the North American Newspaper Alliance.

Albert Halper, who was born in Chicago, has contributed to Pagany, The American Mercury and to the second and third "American Caravan." He is the author of two novels, one of which is to appear next fall.

Allen Tate is the author of two biographies and two volumes of verse, the most recent being, "Poems 1928-1931," which appeared this month under the imprint of Scribner's. He is at present working on a life of Robert E. Lee.

Mary Heaton Vorse, the well known novelist and labor journalist, whose most recent novel was "Strike," traveled extensively through England and Germany last summer as correspondent for Harper's Magazine. She was a member of the committee of New York writers who were run out of town by the Pineville, Kentucky, authorities last month.

Herman Simpson, a contributor to The Bookman, The New Freeman and other magazines, was formerly an editor of The New York Call.

Robert Cantwell, author of "Laugh and Lie Down," is at present living in New York City, where he is doing

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